

The DUKE of DULUTH



by
Thomas Hall Shastid, M.D.



THE DUKE OF DULUTH

MN

THE DUKE OF DULUTH

BY

THOMAS HALL SHASTID, M. D.,

Author of "Simon of Cyrene,"
"Who Shall Command Thy Heart?"
etc.

IN TWO VOLUMES. Vol. I

"East is East and West is West, and *ever* the
twain shall meet"—at Duluth.
"‘Mount Service’ I call it."—Jean herself.

DISCARDED

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BY THOMAS HALL SHASTID

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WITH MUCH ESTEEM
THIS VERY IMPERFECT PERFORMANCE
IS DEDICATED TO

The Queen of Many Waters

AS SHE SITS ENTHRONED ON HER MIGHTY BLUFF,
LOOKING DOWN THE CHAIN OF ENORMOUS LAKES,
WITH THEIR INCOMPARABLE COMMERCE, AND ON
OVER TO EUROPE AND SO INTO THE BRIGHT FUTURE
OF ALL THE WORLD. MAY HER SLOGAN EVER BE
THAT OF HER OWN DAUGHTER, JEAN—SERVICE AND
SUPERSERVICE TO HUMANITY

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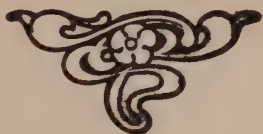
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BOOK I
SERVICE MOUNTAIN



CHAPTER I
SAFE CENTER, IOWA, COMES TO
MOUNT SERVICE

The Duke of Duluth

CHAPTER I

SAFE CENTER, IOWA, COMES TO MOUNT SERVICE

A LOUD, long, magnificently rich and vibrant "Lo-o-o!" came persistently and persuasively into the room.

The sleeper awoke, but, after the manner of all youth on such occasions, turned over and attempted to sleep again. No success.

The rich, sonorous, vibrant tone was repeated. Then John Gridley Smith began to realize where he was—in "The Zenith City of the Unsalted Seas"—and to remember, in a brisk panoramic waking-dream, for he was a kind of visionary student, the genesis of the strange Duluthian region. First of all he beheld a vast dark star come roaring past our then planetless sun and off again into space. When it had gone, he beheld that certain disruptive tides of matter had been torn by the visitor's gravitational attraction clear off the sun and on opposite sides thereof. The resultant masses were molten, radiant, thin—mere fire-mists.

As the masses whirled about, however, they sepa-

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rated into planets, and some of the planets threw off satellites. One of the planets (the young man somehow knew) was the Earth.

And when the molten Earth had cooled and condensed sufficiently, behold! the atmosphere of steam which clung all round about it, cooled too, and settled in the hollow places of the rocks and became seas and lakes—including, after a time, Lake Superior.

The world was unstable at first; but, when it had turned topsy-turvy and inside out rather often, there came life into the water, and then, later, on the land. After a while man came, or evolved—primitive man, from whom we are supposed to have ascended. Along about the close of the last ice age, there was a considerable body of men settled about the head of Lake Superior. These were Mound Builders. They finally went up farther north, following the edge of the ice, and became what are called Eskimo.

After the Eskimo had all departed from the lake region, there came from somewhere the Dakota Indians. These must have lived at the head of Gitchee Gumee (or Lake Superior) for a very long time. Then appeared on the scene the Ojibway (or Chippewa) Indians. These had lived along the shore of the St. Lawrence River, but, getting a terrible whipping from the Iroquois Indians of New York

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(about the same time that the Pilgrim fathers settled in Massachusetts) they rushed down the chain of waters as far as there was any chain of waters to rush down. Then they stopped, whipped the Dakota Indians, drove them across what is now called St. Louis Bay, and kept the Wisconsin shore of the Lake for their own habitat. Among the Ojibways—Hia-watha and so on.

Came suddenly white folk—French voyageurs. Then French missionaries. Voyageurs again. Among the later voyageurs was a Daniel Greysolon, Sir DuLhut—a fearless man who, well-nigh single-handed, went down from the Head of the Lakes through the howling wilderness almost to the Falls of St. Anthony (where Minneapolis now stands) there rescued Father Hennepin and brought him—black gown, gold cross, companions, and everything—back to the Great Lakes and white-faced society.

For this bold Frenchman the city of Duluth (when, two centuries afterward, it came into being) was named—the city which itself, according to its inhabitants, has always had a penchant for achieving the impossible.

After a little more dreaming of this historical sort, a ship lo'd again, and the young fellow became fully and absolutely awake. "Hello yourself!" he cried. He sprang up, threw off the bed-clothes, and rushed to the window. There it all indeed was—"Gitchee

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Gumee, Big Sea Water"—just as he had ever imagined it, only far more beautiful. Yonder, straight across the Bay of Superior, lay the Wisconsin shore. To the right, under the airy tracery of the Interstate Bridge, stretched the mirror of St. Louis Bay, with its shadow bridge inverted in the glassy deep. Beyond that mighty structure he knew to be West Duluth; Morgan Park, the Steel Plant City; also Gary, New Duluth, and Fond du Lac. To the left, yonder in the opposite direction, must stand—ah yes, there it arose—the bridge aerial! He had had in his childhood a little cup and saucer, each of which had borne a scarlet picture of that bridge. They had been sent to him on his sixth birthday by Uncle John Gridley. Poor dear old Uncle John! Dead now. No more— He laid aside the melancholy thought.

A few minutes later he had bathed, dressed and descended to the dining-room of the hotel. There, as you may be certain, he got into a chair from which he could plainly behold the busy street. Ah, the attraction of a busy street to such a young man! John fairly laughed aloud as he beheld the comings and the goings, the rushings all about, the eager faces and the frantic gestures. He thought of the probable undermeanings of it all.

He again laughed (or, rather, just kept on laughing) as his order was brought—a man-sized steak

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and, as a lawyer might have said, all the trimmings and appurtenances thereunto belonging or in anywise appertaining. The process that followed was less like breakfasting than like coaling a ship. When he had emptied all the dishes, he looked about with still keener delight. No, he had not quite finished, even yet. There was something in this air—a sense of exhilaration—it was, he believed, ozone from the Lake. He again ordered, and, while hungrily waiting, picked up a newspaper. There, first of all, was a long and sensational account of a dastardly murder, wherein it was sought to arouse great sympathy for the murderer. Never a thought of sympathy, John believed, for the widow and orphans of the murdered man. Another article told about a Chicago surgeon who, while operating, had dropped dead. His assistant had promptly taken his place and completed the operation. The young man laid the paper down. Too much death. Life ran so abundantly in his own veins! Ah! the second breakfast!

As he again ate, he began to indulge in reminiscences about Safe Center, Iowa, where he had been born and brought up, and where his mother still lived. Her fond kiss seemed still to linger on his youthful forehead. Dear old Momsie! He wondered what this trip would eventually mean to her, to himself. In the midst of his eating he paused, and drew from his breast pocket an already opened letter.

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Then he read, for about the hundredth time, as follows:

Mr. John Gridley Smith,
Safe Center, Iowa.

DEAR SIR:

Please present yourself in my office (Arrowhead Bldg., Duluth) next Tuesday morning at 10 o'clock. There you will learn of matters deeply concerning your welfare. Enclosed is a check for \$100.00 to cover expenses.

Yours truly,

EDWARD PROTEUS, Atty. at Law.

John was especially glad about the check. He wondered and wondered what the "matters" would be that he should learn about from Mr. Proteus and which "deeply" concerned his welfare. He ventured to hope, barely ventured, that his kind old Uncle John had bequeathed him at least a tiny legacy wherewith to continue his education. Already he had graduated at the Safe Center High School and had had three years of university extension work. How much more exciting now, spite of his twenty-one years, it would be to take a degree at some world renowned university. Then he felt a strange emotion in his soul—a conflict of inherited instincts. Should he be a scholar, or should he be a man of business?

John's father, several years dead, had been a carpenter. But he had also been a scholar—in a desultory and rather feverish way. He had had but a

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common school training, yet, in the intervals of his carpenter's work, had managed to acquire a slight reading knowledge of Latin and Greek. And his ambition for John had been that John might become a noted scholar. Every night, at bedtime, John Smith, Senior, as far back as John Smith, Junior, could recollect, had held family prayers, and, at the close of each, even after the fervent amen had been plainly uttered, the father had remained for a few moments, silent, still kneeling at the chair, with hands clasped and lips moving, moving—in, as John supposed, and rightly, some sort of supplementary imploration. Not till this second and silent prayer had been completed, had the good, old-fashioned father bowed his head to the chair's very seat, wept, and then arisen.

Just what this supplementary prayer was about, John Junior had never known till the day before his father's death. Then his father had told him. He had been praying that, somehow, his son might be enabled to take a university training and become a professor in some famous college. It was the highest possible aspiration which he could have for his son. He had not, as he lay there on his death-bed, asked John to promise that he would, if possible, become a professor, or even that he would try to attend some great university. But John had always felt from the center of his soul a clear call to scholarship, and,

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after his father's death, he had taken it for granted, as if it had been an item in the very book of fate, that a scholar and perchance a university teacher he would some time be.

But, again and yet again, there had stood up before him like an insurmountable wall, his appalling lack of means.

Even with the help of his mother (he wondered) could he afford to attend a university? She, spite of ill health, was a hard worker and a shrewd manager, but the cost of living at universities had mounted so high that John, even with his mother's help and a fair-sized scholarship, had never quite been able to figure out a college education as among his possibilities.

Now, all at once, everything had been—at least it possibly might have been—changed. If only Uncle John had remembered him, say with three or four thousand. But no, that was too much to expect.

Uncle John had not been really his uncle at all. He had merely married John's father's sister. He had left, to be sure, neither widow nor child. Moreover, John had been named for him. But then, spite of all that, there was Claud. Claud had been Uncle John's own nephew, Uncle John's flesh and blood. Moreover, Claud had been Uncle John's well-nigh constant companion for a number of years.

As John thought of his cousin-by-marriage, he

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began to believe that it was full time to go. He stood suddenly up, put on his hat, went over to the cashier's desk, and, laughing at nothing in particular, paid his bill.

He was an average looking young man, but a trifle taller than average, also a little leaner and quicker and more nervous, and he was surrounded by a subtle aroma of well-being which argued a constitution about as strong, say, as that of the United States. The cashier thought he had seen John before. So he relaxed his customary dignity a little, and pleasantly vouchsafed: "Good morning. Fine day to be on the Lake." John replied in a clear, strong voice; pocketed his change (after carefully counting it); asked, according to his habit, a good many questions, smiling the while, and then went to the door.

There it was that his red corpuscles swam in a surging tide of elixir. For one split second he seemed to be in an earthly heaven. He did not know that, in years to come, there would happen in this city an event which would make sad havoc with his life. Just now, he gulped down a strange, round, choking of delight. A fat man, thinking that he knew John, rushed up to him and asked him how he felt. Before he could apologize for the mistake, he had had a smiling answer: "Like whipping Jack Johnson and then going to a safety deposit box to stow away the money."

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"Name's Jones," said the fat man, laughing.

"Name's Smith," replied the young man, laughing also, and handing out a card. The fat man departed west, and John stepped into Superior Street facing the opposite way. Ho! what a crowd, and what a capital big racket! NOISE! Loud, clangorous, deafening, tintinnabulatory, sonorous, obstreperous, clamorous, disorganized, intermittent, repetitive, lambasting, heterogeneous, chaotic, deafening, maddening, uproarious NOISE. And the people! See them coming, see them going, up the hill and down the hill, and eastward and westward—all four ways at once, to the old (already seeming old) accompaniment of shrilling traffic whistles, clanging trolley gongs, darting jitneys, rumbling trucks, hallooing voices. Over at the corner of the Lyceum Building, an old blind man was shouting the Duluth News Tribune in a voice like those of forty mad bulls. It was all very bright and unusual and frantic to the tall young man from Safe Center, Iowa.

As he strolled, he took from his pocket a watch of large diameter and not a little thickness; then, producing from another pocket a tiny key, proceeded, while attempting to seem careless, to wind up the watch. Returning the key to his pocket, he opened the lid of the watch with his thumb nail, read the time. Not yet nine o'clock, and he was only to go to Mr. Proteus' office at ten.

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Well, he would just walk on up the street and look at the building wherein that office was ensconced—the Arrowhead. This he did. And the upshooting pile looked to him less like a building than like a gigantic grayish monolith filled with painted windows.

After wondering where in all that skyey penitentiary his fate might lie concealed, John decided that he had better walk on up Superior Street to kill more time. At this second a policeman, standing tip-toe on the curb, and eying footpassengers frowningly, suddenly looked at John, smiled, then said: "Howdy, son."

John was accustomed to having people think they knew him. He answered, "Howdy, Captain." Then he was struck by a clever idea. "Captain," said he, "I'm a stranger in town, and I have business with a lawyer here, about a will. I *think* it's about a will. Anyway, give me a little advance information on the lawyer—name's Proteus."

"Proteus? Edward Proteus? *I* know him. Haven't you ever met Ed. Proteus? I forgot you're a stranger. Well, he's about the powerfulest lawyer in the city. Tall, raw-boned, and hair's what he ain't got. O, may be a little just above his ears. And his eyes—them *eyes*! Whenever he looks away from you, you wisht he'd look back again, they're so magnetic; and whenever he looks back again, you wisht he'd look away

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from you some more—cause you're thinkin' of all the confounded meanness you been an' done."

John laughed. "I understand. Good friend, bad enemy."

"You said it. 'Bye."

John walked on, drawing into his lungs gulp after gulp of Superior ozone. He was full of life at any time, and now— Ah ha! What a blue and silver morning! His eyes were gladdened, further, by the new raiment on the hundreds of swarming shoppers. Another policeman spoke to him. Then a little child, hand-led, who started to leave her mother and rush to his side.

After about three corners more, John could stand the pull of the Arrowhead Building no longer, and, returning on his steps, entered the portal of that structure, attempting the while to still the rapid beating of his heart.

For one more moment he stopped and looked back at the crowd. Then there rushed into his mind, by way of contrast, the scenes he had traversed on the night before—starlit views keenly observed with hot, anxious forehead pressed against the railway-coach pane. For hours he had ridden through a forest, then past some little clearing, with its log-cabin or tar-papered shack and nondescript barn. A few fields of potatoes or berry bushes struggling here and there among blackened stumps. Then again the

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almost interminable stretch of forest primeval. Of a sudden he had come into all this! How had he managed to sleep in the hotel last night, after his arrival, instead of walking all those wondrous hours about the streets?

A man came into the corridor with a great rush, entered one of the elevators hurriedly, and shot like a bolt of reversed lightning into the vast depths of mystery above. It might have been Mr. Proteus. He was tall, and hair was what he didn't have.

All about John now were the peaceful sounds of a chamberman mopping the corridor, the wet slap-slap of his mop and the grating noise of his bucket dragged on the stone, or perhaps terraza, floor. But a great fear came into John's heart—a fear born of the over-intensity of his many desires.

No, he would not beard Mr. Proteus in his legal den before the appointed moment. Out into the street again, therefore, and on the curb—that magic curb. Upon it he stood for a long time, with back-tilted head staring at the serried rows of windows, tier over tier above him—wondering, wondering, in just what office his destiny (if any) might lie concealed.

He suddenly became conscious of a ring of observant faces, a wall, as it seemed, of fellow curious beings who appeared to find him quite as interesting as he had found the skyward building. He buttoned up

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his coat, again entered the corridor, and, having got into an elevator, shot towards the sky. The elevator woman let him off at the correct floor—the highest in the building—and he soon discovered the office of the man he sought. Trembling, he walked in.

The waiting-room was in the back, or lakeward part of the building, and it held, at present, no occupant. In the middle stood a table, covered with guide-books to the Arrowhead country, and with newspapers and magazines. Three windows opened in the lakeside wall, which John then stood facing, while, to right and left, were doors to private offices. On a glass in one of these spoke the legend, "Merle Mulkins, Attorney at Law." At the opposite side of the room, just this—"Edward Proteus." The public, then, was supposed to know by instinct that Edward Proteus was a lawyer. At all events, Edward Proteus was not going to tell them, gratis, anything at all about himself—except that himself was himself.

Voices, low but gruff, and very suggestive of legal mysteries, came from behind the Protean glass. The other office was silent, and so too was the waiting-room, except for the legal, or lay and legal, voices, seeping in, gratuitously but accidentally and unintelligibly, from Mr. Proteus' office, and the eternal dull growl which pervaded the air and which had its origin far, far below in the commercial activities of Superior Street and Michigan Avenue.

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Two tables, each full of drawers and crowned with a hooded typewriter, stood at each side of the room, two by the door of Mr. Proteus, two by that of Mr. Mulkins.

John walked over to one of the windows and looked out. For a moment, then, he held his astonished breath. If the view from the window of his hotel room had been inspiring, what about this one? He tried in vain to still the rapid beating of his heart. All the mighty harbor, both water and land, lay stretched like a map before him. Scores of great ships moved majestically about, or lay alongside coal docks, ore docks, mammoth elevators, endless railroad yards, so on. The eye was lost in the intricacy and vastness. Over it all, the great arched roof of the sky, full of the old-fashioned sailing ships of heaven!

A light step at the hall door. John turned. Then his heart beat faster than ever before in his life.

Just entering the room was the slim figure of a girl, or perhaps young woman, in a light blue dress and a straw hat trimmed with corn flowers and sweet minneopas. Her eyes were bluer, John thought, than the sapphires of Montana, or even the blue of the Lake, as the Lake dreamed outside, reflecting and intensifying the azure of the sky.

He tried to speak to the young lady, but could not. She, however, believing that she recognized John,

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came quickly forward with an outstretched hand. Before she discovered her mistake he had taken the hand, bowed just a little over it, and dropped it again without speaking.

"O!" she cried. "I thought you were Mr. Tyrone."

The fair oval of her face was simply exquisite. And how she radiated health and charm! John saw her in a rose mist, a golden glory.

He stammered, then said: "Just—plain Smith—John Smith."

She laughed, a trifle embarrassed herself, and explained, somewhat superfluously: "I thought I *knew* you."

"And *I* thought *I* knew *you*." He came within an ace of adding, "We must have been made for each other," but somehow managed to refrain just in time.

Then she: "Well, it can be just as we thought, can't it?" The words were said so candidly and honestly, and moreover with so much grace and charm, that no one could have taken them amiss. Moreover John believed that, had she not been a little embarrassed herself, she would not have spoken them.

"Be it so," said John. "I am truly delighted. You'll like me when you *do* know me, I'm sure. Beneath my rugged exterior beats a heart of pure gold." The golden heart was beating pretty rapidly too, he might have added.

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She looked upon him as if she did not know whether his speech was the lightest flippancy or self-praise spoken stupidly in embarrassment. And she kept on gazing, whereby it would seem that his "exterior" did not look to her especially "rugged." John laughed, turned his hat in his hands, and, not knowing exactly what else to say to her, explained that he had come, the night before, from Safe Center, Iowa, that his father was no longer living, that his mother was the very best woman in the world. "And now," he concluded, with much hesitation, "I have—told you so much—about myself—"

"My name," she said, in answer to his unasked question, "is Jean La Croix. I spell it J-e-a-n, though it came to me in longer form; life is too short for the writing of unpronounced syllables. I live up there [pointing] with my mother, a widow, on about the highest point of the whole bluff. In that exalted situation I very often feel as if I owned the city—Mount Service, I call it. The view—I want you to know that I am descended from the Sieur Duluth himself. He married Warrena, daughter of White Otter, the Ojibway chief. From them my father (at least he believed that) was directly descended. My mother (if you care to know so much about me) comes of old Mayflower stock. Since I have said all this, I ought to add that, from my father, I have inherited also much Irish, Scotch, and Scandinavian

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blood. You see I'm a little of everything, so—altogether American."

John opened his lips as if to ask some interesting question, but she, feeling that she had probably said too many things in earnest, went rushing on: "Yes, I am *full* of blood—as are all Duluthians. It's the lake air that does it, that and the cranberries and blueberries and all the [she made a sweeping gesture] all this northwestern wheat, as well as the innumerable ancestors."

John wanted to tell her that he himself was a great mixture of bloods, mostly from an old English family, but also (as to America) from east, from west, from south—all combining in the dear little melting pot called Safe Center, Iowa; but the hall door opened and in walked a large, fleshy woman of about forty-five. In a querulous tone, she asked: "What is there in it for me, this talking with young men before the day starts? Jean, haven't you anything to do?"

"I conquered all the *old* work last night," explained Jean, gently waving an arm in mock-majestic triumph. "And Mr. Proteus hasn't come out with any new adversaries this morning. Besides, I got here today much too—"

"Early! early! early! You're always much too early. That's nearly as bad—" She suddenly got a good glimpse of John through her short-sighted eyes.

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"Why, I thought you were Mr. Tyrone. Pardon me."

"You had better ask pardon of Mr. Tyrone," advised John, laughing, as usual. He quit twirling his hat. "I wonder if it is not my cousin, Mr. Claud Tyrone, that you took me for. We're not really—"

"Not really cousins? No. I knew that. In my capacity of confidential—" She motioned with an air of mystery toward Mr. Proteus' door.

"It's strange," commented John, "that Claud and I, being only cousins by marriage, should still look so very much alike. Thus far I've never seen Claud, yet I'm told—well, I'm told he's—why he's a very good-looking man."

"He is, he is," laughed the fat lady, like a large rubber ball rolling down a long staircase. "Magnolia Banyard's my name." She reached him a hot-moist hand. "You, of course, are Mr. John Smith."

"I am one of the numerous Mr. John Smiths—who have sought, I believe, to redeem the commonplaceness of their names—"

A buzzer sounded, and Miss Banyard, explaining with a billowy giggle that she was really the confidential secretary of the great Mr. Proteus, tripped off and into Mr. Proteus' room.

When the Protean door had closed, John, slowly, ever so slowly, turned his face till his eyes were looking straight into Jean's.

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And Jean, on her part, had been looking straight at John all this golden while. Now, as he gazed directly at her with his wide, brown, honest-looking eyes, she beheld, far away within them (together with a too great sensitiveness) some restless, unsettled and unsettling thing, a flicker perhaps of the wild banners of romance. Then there arose in her heart a sense of adventure, of intrepid enterprise, of insistent beckonings of great and far off achievements—destinies as certain as if they were things that had already been and so were all beyond the chance of time to change or alter.

She believed she ought to say something, so asked, somewhat lamely: "What do you think of our Lake?"

John waited long before answering, his eyes all the while looking far, far out over the water. "I like the Lake," he said, at length. "I—I more than like it. I—why, it's as still as glass, and in it I see, inverted, the great blue bowl—" He was about to say, "of heaven," but thought better of that, and, instead, put it: "the sky."

She went up closer to the window, therefore also to John, and, having looked out for some moments, rhapsodized: "The Lake is not beautiful merely because of its color and form. There is also its great service to the world. What a lake for service! The ships and the trains, the comings and the goings, the busy docks and elevators—"

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“‘Service’ is a delightful word,” broke in John. “It hisses not a little, but yet— What kind of people do you have in Duluth?” He blushed violently. “I mean—not you and Mr. Proteus— But service?”

“Ah, Mr. Smith, we have all sorts of people here, just as all sorts are had everywhere. Some that love service merely for the sake of the money that it brings, and some that love it almost entirely for itself alone (that’s the most of us), and some that love it on both these accounts. Some, too, be here that love not service at all—saving only the service of other hands than their own. These are often watchful, powerful, astute, merciless. Their greed sets money above all else in the world—but they do no violence. And then there is the very lowest class in point of service—the criminals. These are to be found in every city on earth. You work, they take from you. If you resist, they may kill you. They have no sort or kind of idea about true business, the mutual interchange of benefits. Not they: they hate the very thought of benefits to the world.”

Mr. Proteus’ door opened. A large man stepped briskly into the room. Jean whispered timidly, “Mr. Proteus.” John recognized the man at once. It was indeed he that had come up the elevator just before John: tall, lean, broad-shouldered, and “hair” was “what he hadn’t got.” The keen gray eyes swept

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the room comprehensively and comprehendingly, rested at last on John. The gaunt face relaxed a little, then hardened again into its iron lines. A voice began speaking, a low, rich voice of much easy power and yet full of dreams. It spoke little and said much. Jean stepped briskly to her desk, handed Mr. Proteus a sheaf of papers. A moment later the private door had closed again on Mr. Proteus.

Jean stood looking at the door for some time, as if oblivious of John's presence. John turned to the window, the Lake. A mighty tumult in his heart and brain. What a great world was this, when one had youth and courage to face it with. For the weak and the aged—

He had a vision of himself as a college professor, saw the very moment in which the professorship would be offered him. He then beheld himself gracefully and learnedly seated at an oriel window in a fine old gothic building, looking out upon the students as they passed and repassed, formed groups, broke them up, and reformed them all about the university grounds. Now and then he would call down to some specially beloved disciple, "Hello there, Bill!" or "How's the Latin, Jimmy?" He would not be stuck up about his fine position. He would be democratic, and all the students would love him. So he would grow old, old and venerable and more and more beloved—just as his mother

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was growing older and more beloved even now.

At the thought of his mother he began, for some reason, to see the Lake again. He believed he would settle in Duluth, after all, and become a part of this—this coming and going and—as Jean had expressed it—this service to all the world. What a beautiful name Jean had for Duluth—Mount Service! And there were various kinds of service too: school-mastering was just one of them, just one.

He heard a quiet tapping, and, looking round, saw Jean at her typewriter. Some one must have come in and given her work, but he could not quite remember when that had happened. How beautiful was Jean: marble skin, night-black hair, eyes (again) like the blue of the Lake. A great noise sounded outside in the hall.

“Good-bye, boys!” rang a clear, masculine voice. “Yes, I’m going back to Granville University. No. Get on out. You can’t come in here, I tell you.” Miss Banyard entered the room from Mr. Proteus’ office, and at the same moment there entered from the hall—it might have been John’s very self. And yet— No, it never could have been John—quite.

CHAPTER II
THE MAN WHO GOT THINGS IN THE
EASIEST WAY

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THE MAN WHO GOT THINGS IN THE EASIEST WAY

THE young man that entered, though about John's height and general appearance, was much too blithe and debonair to have been John's *alter ego*. Seeing John, he exclaimed: "What! kissing the girls? Well, get it the easiest way. Don't kiss the two though at the same time: you might fall dead between them."

"That's your cousin," explained Miss Banyard to the newcomer. And she would have completed the introduction, but was promptly interrupted.

"What? *Which* cousin? O the one that looks like me—the handsome chap. No wonder, old man, I caught you kissing: it runs in the family. Well, how do you like our twin sweeties?"

John blushed, and was suddenly a little jealous. Miss Banyard simpered. Jean, still remaining seated, frowned (John thought) just a little. Said she to John's cousin: "Do you come on business?"

"Always on business. Nothing else here to come for. Where's his Royal Nibs—old Proteus, I mean? In his legal lair yonder?"

"Mr. Proteus is in," answered Miss Banyard, before Jean could reply. "Come over here, Mr.

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Tyrone, and sit in this easiest chair next to me. You see you're getting old."

Claud bent over, and, making a great pretense at being a very senile person indeed, whimpered and trembled and stumbled and finally fell into the chair which Miss Banyard had offered him. Of a sudden he leaped up, and, clapping a hand over his heart, cried: "No! A thousand times no! I cannot even *play* at being aged, O beautiful Miss Banyard, when I see—when I see—your wonderful eyes."

Miss Banyard shrieked with delight. Jean smiled. In spite of himself, John thought the acting good. He even started to chuckle.

Just at this moment the slot in Mr. Proteus' door opened, and a bit of paper slipped on through: was caught, however, at the last moment, by the metal cover of the slot coming down too soon to let the slip float off to the floor. Jean marched up to the slot, drew out the slip, went and handed it to Mr. Tyrone.

The latter read the slip with much care, a shade of anger passing (John thought) momentarily over his face. Then he smiled all round the room, and kissed the slip. "Get it!" he cried. "Get it in the easiest way. That's my motto forever. My monthly allowance, ladies and gentlemen, continued by my dear departed uncle, John Gridley (thine too, Cousin Jack) just the same and for the same amount as when he was only dear, being not yet departed. That

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allowance was established for my lifetime before dear Uncle made his will. And what's *in* the will—I don't know, even yet. In any case, confound him and his will."

John felt a flush of shame run up his cheeks to his forehead, and remain there. Jean, who had been looking straight at him, turned and sat again at her desk.

A postman came in, and left on Jean's machine a pile of letters. Jean reached for them, but Miss Banyard got them. "What is there in it for me," she murmured, "in this big pile of letters?" After a time, "There, Jean. That's all there is for you—one picture postcard. That relative of yours in Boston." She put a number of the letters in her handbag, and pushed the rest through the slot in Mr. Proteus' door. Then she returned and sat down very gravely at her desk.

The staccato clicking of two typewriters filled the room, but Claud continued his run of jests and foolery to the girls. John therefore proceeded to note more closely the physical characteristics of this light-hearted cousin. At first he had been struck by the great resemblance between Claud and himself—at least as he had always seen himself in his mother's dull mirror at home. Now he began to note differences. In fact he soon got to wondering how he had ever been able to perceive the slightest likeness be-

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tween himself and his cousin. Claud was at least two inches the taller, he was also wider of shoulder and longer of arm. His hands, moreover, were large and white, and, plainly, very strong, while John's were red and smallish. Claud's face, in addition, was much more striking and less homely than John's: of that John felt quite sure. Yet there were things about that face that John didn't like, expressions that gave him a curious sense of danger yet to come to him, John Gridley Smith. What was it in the face that made John feel so? Of a sudden he began to notice again what Claud was saying.

"Sister Brighteyes!" What! The man was actually so addressing Miss La Croix. Sister Brighteyes indeed! He wondered if "Sister Brighteyes" had ever given this overly offhand chap a right to speak to her in that way. "Sister Brighteyes" listened. "The Chair believes it would like to smoke a cigaret. All in favor say, 'Smoke.' Contrary, 'Suffer.' Nobody having voted, the Chair declares the 'Smokes' have it. Now," went on "the Chair," "there is one thing certain, and that is— Say, Cousin John, have—you—ever—attended—Granville—University—perhaps under some other name than that of John Smith?"

"Certainly not," protested John. "I have often wished I could attend, though—under my own name."

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"Somehow, I have a curious feeling that, at old Granville, I have seen a person that looked just like you. No, not myself, somebody else. I have also a curious feeling that you and I have known each other for years and that we have known a Miss Scaligera Van Dusen together and that we have quarrelled terribly—not about *her*. O my God no, not about *her*. We might as well have quarrelled about the dative case. Or—hold! It may be that I merely look into the future. I am said by some to have the power—a strange, inexplicable prevision— Anyway, spite of kinship, friendship, and all the ships on the ocean, I see that quarrel coming—coming—" He rose, seized the wide top slat of his chair in his big white hand, and crushed it easily all to pieces.

Jean's eyes flew open with astonishment at such an exhibition of strength, and her lips cried: "No, no, no!"—as if a quarrel were actually impending.

"Beg pardon, Sister Brighteyes, everybody. I was just about to have a smoke. However, as I never roll a cigaret in the presence of ladies, I—" He put his left hand behind him, and there, out of sight, prepared the little roll. When the process had been completed, he lighted a match in front of him by the flick of his left thumbnail, and, a moment later, began smoking. All the while, his right hand had been dawdling with the slip of paper from Mr. Proteus' office. "Get the makin's the easiest way,"

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he continued. "Then prepare 'em the easiest, light 'em the easiest, smoke 'em the easiest. And all the while [puff] you [puff] look at people that are the easiest to look at.—Cousin John, come out and see us this very afternoon. You know the address. I'm glad you met me."

As he reached the hall door, he turned and bowed. "A parting bit of advice to the ladies. Work hard and kiss often—each other, I mean, not my cousin Jack. Ladies, I have the honor to remain your humble and and not overly prosperous—"

He was gone. The door had closed after him.

John caught the sounds of his quick, elastic tread for a moment, and then, when he had turned to the room again, he saw that Jean and Miss Banyard were very busy at their typewriters. For a while he felt a little lingering pang of jealousy. How easily his talkative cousin had caused these women to listen, and how, the very moment he was gone, their inmost thoughts had followed him. A little, wee voice came wandering in from the water, and stopping at a window of the waiting-room, whined there dolefully, as if it were one of the sad spirits of the Lake.

"That's Paupukkeewis," declared Miss Banyard to John, in a hoarse whisper. "He means trouble for some of us, if not now then some time." She began to tell the story of a terrible shipwreck on old Gitchee

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Gumee, that of the Mataafia, right there by the Aerial Bridge—an unspeakably terrible event which had been pre-announced in just this way. All at once, Jean's buzzer sounded. Jean took the receiver up, and responded: "Yes, he's still here. Certainly." Putting down the receiver, she explained to John: "Mr. Proteus is still busy. He asks, though, that you return at one this afternoon."

CHAPTER III
ANDY POLANO AND THE WATER-
CARRIERS

CHAPTER III

ANDY POLANO AND THE WATER-CARRIERS

JOHN, first of all, went to a cafeteria for "dinner." While there, he reflected on the great advantages which he believed that his cousin Claud had over him, John Smith, in the presence of women. He decided that, just so soon as he had had yet another steak, he would "make a bee line" for the nearest men's shop, issuing thence, a trifle later, clad in more suitable attire. But one steak led to another, and, when he had finally left the restaurant, the hands of his thick, but fairly accurate, watch were pointing to half past twelve. Suddenly, while on his way to the clothing store, whom should he meet but Claud?

"How did you like Old Fatty and Sister Bright-eyes?" inquired that dashing gentleman.

John felt a flame of anger light up within his soul, and did not reply. Claud, seeing the signal, said once again, to pacify him: "Come and see me, Jack: you know the number. Ride up the hill, then walk. Always get everywhere in the easiest way. This afternoon. Come." He stepped into a brand new car, and was off.

It did not take John many minutes to get the

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clothes he wanted, and, when his new raiment, including shoes and collars, shirt and silk tie, had been done up in several pasteboard boxes, and duly delivered to him, he asked of the clerk: "Where can I sell this old suit?"

Another of the clerks, overhearing, laughed. "At Andy's."

"Where's Andy's?"

"Two blocks up, one over—little red shack on Winter Hill Avenue—three balls. Only loan shark in the place that still uses three balls."

"I see," said John. "What kind of man is Andy?"

"He don't keep any help," said the clerk that had tied up the boxes, and John thought he was winking at Clerk No. 2. No. 2 said, "He *can't* keep any."

"Rich?"

"Too rich."

"Liberal?"

"Not too liberal."

"How did he make his money, then? Has he any friends?"

"Nobody ever calls on him. In old times he never went out except on rainy days, and then he held a big mastiff by a chain. Now he doesn't go out at all, except in the loudest thunder-storms. Then, day or night, he goes to a storm cave which he has high up on the bluff. There he shakes his fist whenever it lightens, and mocks the thunder in a big bull voice.

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One day the mastiff tried to eat him, and he shot the mastiff and the other man too."

"What other man?"

"Innocent bystander.—Two blocks up, one over—little red shack with three balls."

The young men went to piling suits of clothes, and John, feeling that he ought not to do any more cross-questioning when men were so busy, went out. On his way to Andy's he began to realize that he might better than not have worn his new suit and carried his old one. He must have been in a great daze, with all this racket and uproar.

Two blocks up and one over, he found the place he sought, a one-story red shack with a basement and with three golden balls suspended over its front door. It had plainly stood as a dwelling house once, but its gable had later been squared at the top and its ground-story window had been slightly enlarged and caused to project a foot or so beyond the front of the building. In the window were two unpainted shelves, containing violins, brass knucks, black-jacks, revolvers, a rifle, decks of old playing cards, rings and brass watches, a box of 22-short cartridges, a faradic battery, and half a dozen seashells engraved with the Lord's prayer. Through the window he saw, at the back of the room, suits of clothing, no doubt second-hand, hung up in thick rows. There also seemed to be a rear room, and there was, too, a door

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at the side of the front room, which must have communicated with the adjoining building, which was also a shack. This adjoining building had no door opening on the street, merely a small window over which a thick curtain was drawn.

"Do you fawnt to groak me, or vill you sell me sometings sheap?" John jumped like a cricket, and looked down. At the dirty basement window, a great yellow, peering face. "I want to sell you a suit of old clothes, and I'll sell it cheap indeed."

"Vait till I de preparations made have." The face disappeared, there was a sound of several slamming doors, of the turning of several rusty keys, of the shaking and clanking of a number of heavy chains. There was also, John noticed, a sour, cool odor all about the place. Soon a somewhat distant voice, the same coarse, croaking, large-bird-like voice: "Vell, ton't stand dere all tay: I'm ready now."

John took this as an invitation to enter, and pushed the door open, but did not close it after him as he went in.

"Are you 'Andy'?"

"I ain't anypody else." The old man was sitting on a very high stool behind the backmost counter of his room and his hands seemed to be folded under the tails of his overlong coat. Thus postured, he resembled an ancient, if very large, yellow-headed but black-bodied parrot. His eyes were blue, his

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hair kinky and red, while his nose proclaimed him a member of that race which, from earliest times, has seemed to produce both the highest and the lowest specimens of humanity. John thought him about seventy years of age.

"Holy Cheesus, do you gum to gill me?" Thus he greeted John, as soon as his spectacles had been accurately adjusted.

"How much for the outfit?" asked John, ignoring Andy's question. John stood very straight, moving his hands up and down to show that he referred to the things he had on. Then he turned slowly and stiffly round, like a revolving dummy in a furnishing-store window.

"Six tollars."

"Make it twelve."

"For everyding—the whole outfit? shoes, sdock-ings, hat an' gollar and tie—eferyding?"

"Everything—the whole outfit."

"Done." He actually gave John the money.

"New clothes here," said John, tapping the packages he carried. "Any place to change in?"

"Pack tere behint de koiting."

John went back behind the curtain, and when he had issued thence, was dressed from top to toe like a man-sized doll. Looking at himself in a long glass, he drew a sigh of relief. He had begun to fear that the suit would not, after all, fit him quite so well

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when the people who had sold it to him were no longer near to pull and drag it into place all over him.

He handed the old clothes, hat and shoes, collar and tie included, to Andy, and went out, muttering to himself (for he had not forgotten that he was a scholar): "Now the Latin for 'trousers' is '*bracae*, *bracae*.'" "

Gone hardly a block, he happened to remember that he had left his watch—that great, fine watch that once had belonged to his father, in a pocket of the vest which he had just passed over to Andy. Back therefore to the shop in great haste.

But Andy pretended not to know him, never to have seen him before.

"What, you don't know me? You never have seen me?"

"Not in dis voilt, my kint, koot-looing friend."

All of a sudden John saw the chain of his father's watch in old Andy's vest. "*That*," cried he, "is what I've come for, my father's watch. I didn't mean to sell you that."

"Of course you didn't," said the old chap, cunningly. "But anodder young man, he also did. A long, long time ago, he soldt me his oldt outfit 'everyding ingluded.' And the vatch, it is certainly a part of 'everyding.' Id was derefore 'ingluded.'"

John was so dumbfounded at the old dealer's brass and dishonesty, that, for a moment, he could

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not utter a syllable. He merely stood working his hands and his lips like a voiceless spectre. Of a sudden he found words, and what he then said to Andy was sufficient to make his meaning plain beyond the thinnest shadow of a doubt.

At length, when Andy was persistently crying at him: "Thief! Liar! Hold-up man, what you are!" John could not stand the tension any longer. In a frame of mind which nothing short of physical action could relieve, he pushed the old man up against his counter, removed the watch and the chain from his vest, and attached them to his own person.

"I'll haf you arrest," cried the old man, no longer yellow but black in the face. "I'll haf you arrest. Dis matter shall be settle."

"All right," said John firmly. "If you want the matter settled, come on down to the police station."

"Holy moiduh! Fifteen, yes, dwenty and dwenty-five years ago, I a dream had. And I seen my fadduh. And my fadduh said, 'If efer you out of dis shop ko, unless it pe stoiming, den somebody will gill you kvick. In de shop always stay.'"

"Come!" said John, grabbing his hand.

"Holy moiduh! Not for dwenty-five year I been from de shop out. Here always I stay, unless it pe a thunduh-showuh ant I kot to ko to my gave. If now I ko out, I be moided."

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"Stay if you like," exclaimed John, making for the door.

Andy ran in front of him, trying to get the watch back. Failing, he followed John, hatless, into the street, crying: "Moiduh! Moiduh! I had, I tell you, dat tream. I be moided, if you don't de vatch gif me back kvick."

"To the station," responded John, relentlessly.

At first the old man ran forward to John, then backward to the shop. But, at length, cupidity getting the better of superstitious fear, he dashed up close behind John, and seizing the tail of his coat with one hand, called: "*Now* mebbe I ko and nobody see to kill me."

So they went to the station, John stopping, from time to time, to inquire the way.

There arrived, John phoned for Mr. Proteus, but, being informed by Miss Banyard that the lawyer had gone out of town and that John was not to come to the office again till three the next afternoon, John said to the judge that he knew not what to do, except to tell his story himself.

"Plaintiff first," ruled the judge.

Old Andy, not needing any pressure to make him do so, told his tale at once, and, though he added to the facts a number of embellishments, the laconic, gray-haired magistrate, at the wind-up of the story, decided: "No case. It was plainly intended by the

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young chap yonder that you were not to have the watch. Shut up. And you, young feller, I want to give you a piece of advice. Don't ever threaten the lives of old men any more—or of anybody. No matter how peeved you are, don't threaten. Threats turn up later and stare you in the face like a—like a—like a policeman. Clerk, enter the facts in your records—especially the threats this here young feller's made against the life of Andy Polano."

John endeavored to tell the judge that he had not made any threats. But that high and masterful dignitary promptly interrupted. "Shut up. Shut up, I tell you, and get out. I've half a mind to lock you both up. Get out. Get on out."

After this excitement, John thought he would go up to Claud's house—merely in response to his cousin's urgent invitation. He walked all the way. And what a walk! He had never had anything like it. Miles on miles of luxurious, even palatial, houses—each with its double or triple rows of enchanted casements looking out over the magic Lake. Arrived at Claud's home, however (rather, his sister's) he was told by a butler that Claud had just that moment left for Granville University, also that his sister had departed the day before to spend the winter in Los Angeles. "Nobody at home but me," he volunteered, winking. "So—if you want—a little drop—Haven't I seen you before?"

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But John did not stop for the "little drop" that the friendly butler would thus surreptitiously have conferred upon him. Still angry, both at Andy and at Claud, he went muttering and rumbling to himself, back to Superior Street, looking in at all the windows of the curio shops, condemning therein the chlorastrolites and Lake Superior amethysts, and afterward staring moodily if also curiously at the various people passing by. After supper he went early to bed, but was up again betimes in the morning; and, after breakfast, was out once more on Superior Street.

Of a sudden, the policeman who, very early the morning before, had spoken to him so pleasantly, came up and inquired: "Two or three hours to spare? Go on up the street and take the *Incline Railway* to the bluff."

John thanked him, and began to move slowly in the direction indicated. In his anger he had forgotten that Jean lived on the bluff. Of a sudden he recollected that fact, and began to walk faster. But just as he reached the Soo Line Depot, a heavy hand was laid on him, and the rich, sweet voice of Mr. Proteus advised: "Lay aside that anger, young man, and come with me."

John felt himself pushed into a luxurious Lexington, afterwards gently pushed on out again, and then, for the second exhilarating time, shot up in the

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Arrowhead Building elevator. A moment later he had passed Jean and Miss Banyard, and was in the private office of Mr. Proteus.

"My case on the Range has just been settled out of court," explained the lawyer; "and so, very much to my liking, I can see you now, instead of at three. Very much to my liking," he resumed, after a few moments' pondering, "because I have very much to say to you, and now, with all the other clients put off for the day, we shall not, it is likely, be interrupted."

Just at this moment the 'phone rang, and Mr. Proteus, after pronouncing his name, listened for a time, then said: "I don't as a rule take criminal cases, but I will take this one. No, just a personal favor: I know that fine young man, and he is wrongfully accused. Send him here tomorrow: half past two."

He hung the receiver up, opened a great iron safe, took out a simple-looking document, and stood for some time gazing at it without opening it. Then he looked at John intently.

John felt uncomfortable beneath those searching eyes, so, after fidgeting a little in spite of himself, he ventured: "There seems, Mr. Proteus, to be a terrible wave of crime all over the United States."

"Are you interested in criminology?"

"O—no more than anybody else. But I often have

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thought, just as many others think, that if the courts and prison authorities and legislatures and even Congress, were all to do their duty—”

“Well, Mr. Smith, what then?”

“We’d get rid of all the criminals. What, sir, Mr. Proteus, is the use of keeping criminals? We don’t want them. They’re of no use, either to themselves or to others. Yet we both keep them and breed from them. I had a high school oration once in which I mentioned that a farmer would not breed from stallions which tried to kill the rest of the herd and even to bite their owners’ heads off.”

Mr. Proteus did not laugh at the high school oration. Neither did he seem to be bored by what this very young man was saying. In fact, he looked as if he wished that the young man would keep on, as if he were learning much that was absolutely new to even him, a very much older man and an experienced lawyer.

John talked on. He gave the entire contents of the high school oration. It seemed so easy to do that when you had an attentive and appreciative listener like this intelligent Mr. Proteus. John wound up by asking, “Don’t you think I am perfectly right?”

“Right. Absolutely right. And yet some difficulties appear, Mr. Smith. Do you know that it is simple indeed to know what animals we want to breed from on the farm, and yet extremely difficult,

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if not impossible, to understand exactly what human beings should be made the ancestors of our future human herds? Also, we should have trouble in killing or sterilizing undesirable men and women. Their friends might object. It's a complex problem at the easiest, and one beyond my solving. We might—Hopeless idiots, of course, and those afflicted with transmissible diseases, we ought to exclude from marrying. Further than that—I don't—”

“But people who commit very terrible crimes! I believe in capital punishment for them. That would exclude—”

“My son!” The lawyer paused and looked far away. John began to be struck by the calmness, the wise tolerance, and even the very thoughtful kindness, of this strong old face. Again the lawyer turned his bright gray eyes on John. “Mr. Smith, if we could only always be quite sure of human testimony. But even the best-meaning people—I have heard them. They *think* they're right, and yet— Do you know that a Harvard professor once staged a ‘fake’ altercation and consequent fight in his class-room? He had the seeming contestants rush from a corridor into the room in front of the hundred or more assembled students, there appear to continue a quarrel, exchange blows, and use (or seem to use) clubs and revolvers. When the combat was over, he had the members of the class write out in full the

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details of the scene as accurately as they could. He did that very thing. And what was the result?

“Remember that the whole of the quarrel and the fight had been rehearsed for days before, and had gone off exactly so. There was, then, no question at all as to what had happened. The question was, simply: How near to the truth could those hundred spectators come?

“Remember that these spectators were exceptionally intelligent men, men selected by extremely rigid processes of exclusion, before they had entered the University, men whose powers of observation had been most carefully trained for two or three years even since *that*. They had also all been sitting where each and every one of them had had almost precisely as good a chance to see and hear the quarrel and the combat as any of the others had had. Not one of them, moreover, could have had the slightest motive for perverting the truth. On the contrary, each written account of that staged occurrence was to be marked the higher the more accurately it described the transaction.

“What was the result nevertheless? There was no uniformity whatever in all those hundred—it may have been more—accounts. Some were fairly accurate, but the most were terribly wrong. No two accounts were alike. What shall be said, then, of the testimony given in a court room—given, for the

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most part, by untrained observers, often by people who have more or less secret motives for perverting the truth, and so on?

"If only a person could ever be quite sure that a conviction is really a conviction! But I have known a man to confess to a cold-blooded murder, when, in fact, no murder had been committed. He thought he was protecting a friend.—I have here—" He looked again at the simple-seeming document in his hand.

When, once more, he had seen fit to resume speech, he spoke of another topic. "I'm a very old man, Mr. Smith, and I was also a friend of your uncle, Mr. John Gridley. I would be a friend of yours, too, Mr. Smith—provided you would let me. Your uncle, in fact, desired not once but a hundred times that that might, ultimately, be so. What plans have you formed for the future—if I may be so bold as to ask?"

John looked pained. "I—very sorry I am, Mr. Proteus. My plans—I haven't really decided—You see, I have two plans, and I can't possibly carry out both of them."

"So I have heard."

"From Uncle John?"

"Yes, from your Uncle John."

"I—I have really inherited conflicting interests and instincts from my father and my mother."

"As have the most of us."

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"My father's blood has brought me the wish to be a scholar. But my mother—she was not a scholar, not at least to a very great extent. She liked to read. But she wanted me to make money, to— Not that she valued money at all for its own sake. She wanted it for me, for the church, for a hospital, for people who were very poor. She wanted—" Tears came into his eyes. "She was much, in that respect, like one of your stenographers, sir. She believed in service, in superservice to the world."

The lawyer came and laid a kindly hand on the young man's shoulder. "Speaking of superservice," said he, "come here."

John went with him to the window.

"Look out."

John had scarcely needed the invitation.

"Not so long ago," said Mr. Proteus, "there was no town here. Even Superior was not founded till 1854. Before that rather recent date, the red man reigned supreme. But now he is gone, at least he is out of sight on the reservations. The snarling wolf has gone with him. The deer are out in the forests yonder [sweeping his hand comprehensively]. No more incantations, harvest-dances, sun-dances, dances for the green corn, *et cetera*. Now—" As if to punctuate his sentence and to illustrate it also, one of the great lake steamers threw out a long, rich, resonant note. It went spreading over the vast

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watery stretches of the inland sea, and, landward, over the hills and far away. The eyes of the lawyer looked into remote distances, and their pupils dilated. "There will come—" Then he smiled to himself, and stopped.

"You will get the fever too," he said, "if you stay here. Jean, my stenographer out yonder, has it pretty badly. Just now she's engaged in inventing some kind of electric steering apparatus for lake steamers. I don't know what. She may tell *you*: you're younger. But can you blame her for having the fever, when you think of all that there is before this place?"

John thought, at first, that he would just brazenly tell Mr. Proteus that he could never in all his life blame his blue-eyed stenographer for anything whatsoever that she might choose to do. But, in a second, he had changed his mind, and, instead, simply asked: "What's before it?"

"Before it? Before Duluth?" He looked at John in astonishment. "Look yonder!" He pointed a little north of east. "There's Great Britain and Ireland. A little south is France. A little farther north are the Scandinavian countries. Down that way—Germany, Austria, Italy (think of the market for durum wheat) and Spain. Jump Russia (which doesn't count) and then you come to the Orient. There are China and Japan; and they're going to

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give up rice and eat the grain of the white man.

"Look this way." He turned and gazed into the west. "First of all, the forests. Then the iron. Then the vast fields—fields and fields and fields and fields. Then the minerals of Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon. Puget Sound! Across the Pacific there's the Orient again. All the world!" He swept each hand as if about a mighty hemisphere. "What's *before* us? What's before us and behind us, and to right of us and to left of us? Yes, and what's under us and above us?"

"*What's* under us?" asked John.

"Sixteen or seventeen stories of red hot business. But that's only a starter."

"What's *over* us?"

Proteus raised a window. "Look up."

John went to the window, and after first looking down, grasped the sill tightly and gazed upward. Vast clouds were sailing in the blue brightness of the infinite sky.

"See them? Do you see them?"

"See what?"

"The water-carriers. Look at them—the big clouds. Keep looking, and presently— Do you see them now—each with a vast bucket of water? Most people look but do not behold. Yonder—there's *one* of them. There's another. I can see them as plainly as if they were steel engravings. That chap

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in front: look at his expression of eternal youth and of rapture over his task of service. There are *scores* of the big fellows: they're just beginning now to come up out of the Lake with their great buckets of water. A whole, vast procession, a mighty caravan of gigantic *aquarii*. And all are headed due west, or southwest or northwest. Off for the big trip! Off for the teeming prairies! There they go, with wheat and oats and rye and barley in their hands, and big forest trees, and pleasant summer flowers to be plucked by little children, and—"

John drew back into the room. There were tears in his eyes. "I thought you were a lawyer," he said, "not a poet."

"A lawyer without vision," said Mr. Proteus, "is no lawyer at all. Lawyers practice self-control, because they need that quality too. But, without imagination—" He made a gesture as if discarding something of absolutely no worth.

"When do you expect this town—" John was beginning to ask one more question.

"Let me question *you*, Mr. Smith." Then, "Suppose you had suddenly acquired six hundred thousand dollars, and wanted to invest it where it would be most likely to be safe and also to grow. What would you do with it?"

"Consult you first, Mr. Proteus."

"Suppose that I should say, 'Invest it in Duluth.'"

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"I'd invest it there."

Mr. Proteus looked happy. "But suppose that the money was already invested in this place, invested as only a shrewd old pioneer and keen-eyed business man like your uncle by marriage, John Gridley—invested as only such a man, with all his knowledge of this city and the great northwest could invest it: what then?"

"I'd leave it invested in this city," gasped John. "Mr. Proteus, has my—"

"Yes, your uncle has left you *all* his property, including six hundred thousand dollars worth of real estate in Duluth."

"My mother! I must telegraph her at once!"

The lawyer felt a deep affection spring up within him for this fine, if somewhat raw, young man. "Your mother; you *must* telegraph her; it is true. But wait till you hear the extent of this fortune." He gave John the inventory. And the stocks and the bonds, and the farms and the homes, and all the fine business properties in Duluth—all, all, all: it was all his.

"My mother!" And then, before he thought, he had said: "Jean!"

Mr. Proteus looked at the red and purple young man for a very long time and in silence. Then, "You could do much worse, my wealthy young friend. But take your time about that and about everything."

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"I didn't mean—"

"Yes, you did mean. And I can't blame you. By the way, don't tell her you're rich. I won't tell anyone either, for the present. You can see how she likes you, first, in your supposedly—er—earlier condition.—But your cousin Claud. He was blood nephew to your Uncle Gridley. You ought to know why he was cut out of your uncle's will. No, listen to *me*. That's part of the situation, and the knowledge belongs to you. Your cousin Claud is a bad man: a trifling, profligate, licentious and altogether undependable fellow. That's why he was cut out. He was also completely cut out of their will by his parents, his sister inheriting everything. And, Mr. Smith, I want to tell you frankly that I believe your uncle made a good will. I only regret that, when he made it, I was out of the city, and did not get to draw it for him. However, it is absolutely valid. And I, as you see, am the executor. But, if that provision is not wholly acceptable to you, I—"

"Acceptable! Of course acceptable! Be both the executor of my uncle's will and also my friend. And now, if some advance—the university—I want—"

But Mr. Proteus had anticipated him. He laid in his hand a pass-book and a block of checks—some of them certified, some blank. "Already in your name," said he, "that much. And I've pointed you out to the cashier of the bank: he knows you. Tele-

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graph to your mother first, of course. What university? Granville? I happen to know from Claud that you can't enter Granville later than tomorrow noon. You can leave at nine tonight and make it. But have you been up on our bluff yet? Go. You've plenty of time. Go before you leave the city. 'Bye. Never mind the gratitude. Just 'bye."

John was out in the waiting-room, and, almost before he knew it, had passed Jean at her desk and Miss Banyard at hers, and had got out into the hall. He had a confused feeling that Jean had not looked up as he passed, and he felt piqued by that. He began to remember, too, that she had not looked up as he and Mr. Proteus had come in, and he felt piqued about that also. Why! Miss Banyard, as he now remembered, had smiled and spoken to him, even called him by his name. But Jean had not looked up!

"O very well! He would take Mr. Proteus' and Mr. Policeman's advice, and go up on the bluff. And if any blue-eyed people should arrive there while he still remained on the spot, he would not, unless they were very, very contrite indeed, or at least especially agreeable—"

CHAPTER IV
THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT SERVICE

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THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT SERVICE

FIRST of all he went to the telegraph office, and there sent to Mrs. Evangeline Smith, Safe Center, Iowa, the sum of one thousand dollars, together with a message of brief explanation and tender love. Then he went to the bank and laid in a large supply of new cash.

When this had been done, he began to believe that, if he went up on the bluff so soon after meeting Jean, it would seem to her—should she chance to meet him there—as if he were much too anxious to see her again. How, then, should he kill time till the nine o'clock train that night? O my! he had forgotten that well-beloved kinsman over in Superior. He should have called him up before. When a person has the prospect of a fortune, and, later, the fortune itself, he cannot always remember everything. Poor Jim! Alas, poor Jim! Uncle John had not remembered Jim. Well, not everyone could be bountifully remembered in some will.

When John had "got" the residence of Jim Smith in Superior, it was only to learn that Jim was out of the city for a month or more.

John strolled along the street, very lonesome.

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He went to his hotel, paid his bill, ordered his satchel taken to the depot and went out into Superior Street again.

Once he halted on the pavement, heedless of passers by and feeling a strange exhilaration. This was all because, on a near window, he had seen, in Hebrew letters, "Kosher." He knew not what the letters spelt, but he did know that he much wanted to learn, and, in accordance with well-established habit, he entered the shop and simply asked the proprietor. Only Jews, he found, purchased "kosher" meat. Also, not all the Jews in the city purchased it, or ate it. Also, no one ever sold it but a Jew. No chance, then, John concluded, for profits to him, a Gentile, in that direction. He had never really thought about the meat business before, but he was always and eternally wondering and thinking about business and profits, as well as about learning.

Following his lonesome way, he came, after an interminable time, to a place on West Superior Street where a high fence was, composed of tall, slender pickets of red-painted iron. In the middle of the fence squatted a little red house, with a closed door. Of a sudden, there came rushing down from upper space—it must have been an airship. A moment later John saw that it was really a funny little car coming down a steep track of wide-set iron rails.

The car came to a stand almost against the fence

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at the left of the little red house, or station, and, a few moments later, the door of the station opened, and people began passing into the street. When they had all got out, John went into the station, and thence, by a sliding side-door, into the car.

He passed at once to the front of the car, at least to the end that looked back over the sidewalk on which he had just been walking, and there took a seat. A fat man came in and sat to the right of him. A moment later, a lean man entered and sat at his left. People began to fill the backmost seats. Presently a gong rang.

Excitement for John. That gong, to him, sounded like a train-bell for Paradise.

Then a wonderful thing happened.

The car did *not* rise. Instead, the street below began dropping. It kept on dropping—softly, ever so softly. John now looked over the spikes of the iron fence, now over the tops of the street-cars and automobiles in the street, now over the labyrinth of railway tracks and docks down by the Lake shore. A great, pentagonal building shot up from the edge of the water, with a black-and-white sign painted across it which seemed to have been made for eyes accustomed to large things—FIREPROOF STORAGE.

A sudden wave of cool, ozonish air blew up from the Lake, engulfed the car and, apparently, the

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whole city. Somebody, two or three seats back, cried: "It's always cool in Duluth." A laugh followed. A pleasant female voice, "I wish all those babies in the seething cauldron of Chicago—" He could hear no more of the sentence, but joined in the wish, knowing that Chicago and Safe Center, Iowa, were both probably roasting still in the same great furnace of heat. Across the aisle a young man, smirking at a handsome young lady, said: "I suppose you've heard of the Swede who declared, 'The coldest vinter ever I saw was a summer in Duloot.' " But the young lady replied, "No; I remember only that I am going to college in a day or two, and that I shall be making a terrible sacrifice—" The voice went down below the hearing point.

And John's attention turned once again to the scene, to the vast void before him which was slipping, slipping away; also deepening and deepening. He was now looking easily over all the house-tops and the pillared elevators, and away and away across the wide inland water. Straight before him stretched the long Bay of Superior. Running off from that to the right—St. Louis Bay, crossed by its numerous railway bridges, and bordered, both shores, by a delicate tracery of coal- and ore-docks. To the left, like a scimitar swung in defense against the assaults of storms, curved Minnesota Point. Tiny toy houses, somewhat incongruously with the scimitar idea,

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stood all over the Point, in the midst of spruce and pine trees, and, about the middle of the western shore, a tiny bleacher-stand ran down to the edge of the water. In a narrow neck of the Point and somewhat near the mainland, arose, like a portal to the large world (that still unexperienced world of commerce and high romance) the far-famed Aerial Bridge. A large steamer was just passing out through the Bridge—worldward. Its great melodious salutation to the peoples seemed to move on before it, crying to the whole globe: "Lo! Lo! Behold what I bring you! Lo! Lo-o-o!"

To the right he heard trains rumbling, away and away!

To the left he looked again. Far beyond the steamer that was passing through the world's gateway, he beheld yet another steamer. Beyond that—another, another still. A long line of diminishing steamers clear over to the distant water's edge! And then—up, up, above that junction-line of green water and blue sky, sailed, like a good-bye message, a tiny smudge of smoke from a steamer that had dropped below the horizon.

Something arose in John that was like fine music. Being young, he longed for sympathy. As was his wont, he began to ask questions. "This is a wonderful ride, don't you think?" He had spoken to the large fleshy man on his right.

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"Saves lots o' yer wind climbin'," was the laconic answer.

John tried the lean man to his left—a tall, delicate person, with China-blue eyes and a look of detachment, as if he might a poet be. "What say?" cried the man.

John spoke louder.

"I beg pardon, but I'm a little deaf."

John shouted his lustiest, so loud, in fact, that people on the paved street below—whereover the car was just now passing—looked straight up to behold the reason for this stentorian voice from the clouds. "This is a wonderful ride, don't you think? Gives you a feeling of uplift."

The man manufactured a wide smile of triumphant comprehension—such a deliriously delighted grin as never is seen, perhaps, except upon the lips of the extremely deaf when they do eventually succeed in hearing something. "Yes," declared the smiler, "lifts you right up." He reached down, and, making a two-handed gesture, as if he had got hold of imaginary bootstraps just below his knees, seemed to be pulling up against some terrible resistance. "Lifts you—hard."

A motherly old woman just behind John, put in confidentially and *sotto voce*: "Look over at Superior."

John looked and was filled with proper awe at the wide expanse of plotted territory. But the fat man

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sniffed. Then he coughed and spat into the street. "You won't see nothin' a-lookin' at Superior. It's quite *inferior*—you look down on it from here." He got up and went, and sat in the back of the car.

"These two towns are one," continued the old lady, still in a soft tone of great confidence. "But ain't either of 'em got gumption enough to see the point yet." John thanked her. The car made one of its numerous station-stops, and the old lady arose and went out.

A young boy who had taken her seat, volunteered: "You're like me; you like to look at the Lake, Mister. See the water out beyond the entry. It isn't all the same hue. There's azure, there's crimson. Away out, farther still, there's lilac and dull silver. And this isn't sunset yet either. Even green and light blue and jet black—*jet* black with golden points of light sparkling and jumping all over it. Gee!"

Presently the boy got out, and John gazed on alone—alone, alone, across the bright void filled with the wonderful afternoon sunlight. Then his sight came back to the solid bluff beneath the car, and to the rapidly receding tracks running far down to Superior Street. Over the roofs of houses, and over giant slabs of gray trap-rock even larger than store buildings! How long would the magic trip endure, this hitherto undreamed of journey into the Land of Sky?

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A heavy hand on his shoulder. Then a voice, "All out—you didn't hear me."

John arose like a man in a sunlit dream, and left the car.

For a time he wandered, scarce knowing what he did—now over this part of the bluff, then over that. All at once—

"I called half a dozen times, and you didn't hear me once. So I went on home. Mother sent me back to bring you up to take dinner with us. Mr. Proteus had phoned to her to have me do that."

"Jean!" cried John. Only that—"Jean!"

"Yes, I'm Jean. And you must come and help me get dinner."

"Do *you* wish it, as well as Mr. Proteus?"

"Yes, sir; *I* wish it, as well as Mr. Proteus. So does Mother Margaret (as we all call her), just as strongly as Mr. Proteus and I do." Jean smiled.

"You see she likes to meet people that ask questions."

CHAPTER V
THE "SCOFFLAW"

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THE "SCOFFLAW"

THERE was much excitement in and about the university at Granville. First football game of the season, but a big game nevertheless! Granville and Gordon—football enemies since Mesozoic Time and the age of terrible reptiles. What a stir all about the campus, all about the "dorms"!

Numerous people of the city were very much interested in the game. Crowds of strangers, too, though this was the first game of the season. Reason for it, reason. Gordon had beaten Granville at football since—well, since Mesozoic Time, the age of terrible reptiles. But, on the present occasion, tables were going to be turned. There was, for one main reason—Coningsby. Of all the quarters that had ever played since Mesozoic Time and Gordon-like reptiles, this Coningsby— Why Coningsby could do *anything*.

About one o'clock, four fine fellows, re-named Hoop-skirts, Landstrum, Billy and Stilts, came tornadoing into Claud's "dorm," and burst like four cosmic catastrophies into Claud's suite of rooms. Claud, curiously enough, was bent studiously over an algebra.

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"What? Algebra!" "Algebra *this* day!" "Impossible!" "*Ain't* no sich animal on sich days!" And so on.

But Claud answered that he had spent sufficient time already in follies here at Granville. "I've flunked enough," he assured them, "in algebra. Now I'm going to pass. I *may* change my mind, and go to the field later. If I do, though, I will go alone. But I'll probably not go."

Then a strange thing happened. Hoop-skirts, Landstrum, Billy and Stilts, after looking at each other in silence for some time, with eyebrows lifted to the tops of foreheads, all at once turned, and, not uttering a syllable, tiptoed out of the room.

Claud heard the soft closing of his outside door. Then he laid his head back and laughed.

A few moments later, he called up on the phone a man named Hooker, who, it seemed, was down at the athletic field already. Of him Claud demanded a certain definite assurance. "Now *will* you, Hooks, or will you not? I want 'yes' or 'no.' "

Hooks swore sulphurously. Then he said, in a tone of great finality: "Listen, you sap-sucking son of a suspicious idiot. The answer is 'yes.' I told you that last night. But don't you dare come up here for that stuff yourself. Send Red G. and now go to Halifax."

Claud "hung up," and drew a great sigh of relief.

Then he called up Red G., and instructed that

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gentleman three times most clearly not to forget that the whole matter in argument was, like Gaul, to be divided into three equal portions. Of these one was to go to Hooks, another was to be turned over to Claud himself in "the old barn," while the third was to be retained by the said Red G. for his own personal use and consumption.

Once again Claud hung up. Then he put on his cap, walked out across the overly quiet campus, and took a car to Billings Field.

He was soon ensconced in a high seat amid a crowd of people that did not know him. And he sat, here at his lofty post of observation, like a cynical god—so still, so still—almost as if he might be wishing to escape observation.

When the game began he closed his eyes. A feeling of confusion together with a certain curious elation had suddenly come into his soul, just as always it had done of recent years whenever he had experienced excitement in any great degree. How he had once wanted to be a football player himself! But, somehow, though strong enough and quick and accurate enough, he had never been able to submit to the necessary training, and so he had failed to get a place on the team.

A great shout arose. He ventured to open his eyes. Loping over to one side of the field was a huge, hideous embodiment of abysmal quickness and strength—

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a primitive Samson with enormous shoulders, colossal arms and legs. This being turned, caught the ball without half looking at it, and then broke through a wall of obstructing men like a great wild stallion through a mass of crackling reeds. Claud again closed his eyes. He could not bear to see Coningsby at his easy work. Neither could he endure the sight of all those eager, expectantly happy Granville faces.

Minutes passed and still more minutes. Then pandemonium broke again. A wild bedlam of yells mingled with shrill whistles and the sounds of horrible tin horns. Two bands on opposite sides of the field mixed crashing and defiant melodies. Claud ventured to look. Ah yes! The very time!

He saw the Granville trainer, "Hooks," run out upon the field with bucket and sponge. Coningsby was limping toward him. The trainer stepped up to him, sponged him off and gave him a cup of water. Good gracious—suppose Coningsby would not drink! But Coningsby drank—drank the clear beverage, apparently to the very last drop.

A moment later the teams were playing again. Claud, whenever his eyes were open, saw little but a vague blue mist. He became all at once aware, however, that a ball had shot out of the mass of Gordon players—very straight and very true. Coningsby advanced to meet it, reached out his arms.

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He seemed to be, however (and strangely enough) a little weak in the knees. He shambled shamefully, almost fell. He would, however, catch the ball easily for all that. Instead, he muffed.

From that time on, it seemed that the work of Granville was lifeless. The Granvillers kicked, recovered the ball on a fumble, then lost it on down. Claud, unable to watch the game any further, closed his eyes.

When the game was done, and Granville, poor Granville, had ignominiously lost, Claud arose; went out across the field; passed Hooks, the trainer, without so much as seeing him; continued till he reached an old ruined barn, perhaps a quarter of a mile away from the football grounds.

Entering the barn, he met a man who held out toward him a large roll of bills. "Granville money," said a husky voice. "The dope done the work."

Claud took the bills, but did not reply. He left the barn in a hurry.

CHAPTER VI
THE LOCKET THAT LIED

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THE LOCKET THAT LIED

IT MIGHT have been a block and it might have been a million miles, wherealong and whereover John was taken by Jean to her cottage. At length, there stood the structure—gleaming. A small white, story-and-a-half affair, enclosed by a very old-fashioned white picket fence, and looking cleaner than a veritable doctor's surgery. To John it seemed an enchanted castle of cleanness.

"Morning Glory Cottage." So Jean introduced the place.

"I like your cottage," John bluntly said, "but not your name for it. The name's too modest. You ought to call that dwelling, at the very least, Sublimity House. And the Point here, what do you call that? Inspiration Point, Service Point, Jean Point?"

She answered the smile with another quite as whimsical, and, gently murmuring: "Big bluff, little house," led the way into the enchanted palace.

There he met Mother Margaret, in her invalid's chair. When he had asked her a suitable number of questions, duly listening to the answers, he glanced about curiously. Jean had snapped the lights on, and gone away. His first impression was one of surprise

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that any room could be so spacious in what had seemed from without so tiny a cot. On the newel post of a rather broad staircase stood a shaded lamp. The lamp was enabled to resist the attraction of gravity by a tallish, copper-looking figure which was really that of a dancing girl, but which, to John's boyish and excited imagination, seemed to be a symbolic representation of "Service to the World." There was a fair-sized case of well-worn books. John slipped over and glanced at their backs: religion, poetry, business, hygiene, books about "helping others," and so on. Beyond the book-shelves stood an old spinning-wheel, above which hung a case of stone Indian relics—mostly arrowheads. On the opposite wall depended a high school diploma, with Jean's name on it; another, also bearing her name, from a local business college. Then, in an old-fashioned frame, a picture of an old-fashioned whaleback with, underneath, the legend—The Warrena, J. N. La Croix, Capt. John remembered that "Warrena" had been the wife of the Sieur Duluth. A highly polished floor. Neat, harmonious rugs. Light tan ceiling and walls. A tall old clock, by the dining-room door, mumbling away to itself about time long dead.

Then there was the well-worn couch near Mother Margaret. That must have been Mother Margaret's bed at night, for Mother Margaret had spoken about

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Jean's sleeping up-stairs. Last of all, he got back to Mother Margaret herself—Mother Margaret, in her wide wing-chair calculated to keep drafts away from delicate necks and shoulders. The dear old lady was just beginning to ask John a third time about Granville University when Jean, entering from the dining room, announced dinner.

John sprang up. "Why, I thought you had gone up-stairs. You asked me to help—"

Jean, ignoring the apology, began singing, from Gillilan:

"She smiled and whispered it to me:
Come on along! Come on along!
What call could more alluring be—
Come on along."

John, in his impulsive way, picked up Mother Margaret's chair, with Mother Margaret herself, the quilt and everything (finding them extra light too) and carried them all out to the head of the dining-table. When he had taken the seat pointed out to him, he bowed his head in unison with those of Jean and Mother Margaret. At the close of "grace," he looked all round the table with his usual garnering eye on such occasions. There was Lake Superior trout (Jean it was who performed the happy introduction to this comforting article) also Wisconsin ham, and Douglas County cheese, and

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Barnum eggs, and St. Louis County potatoes (running just so few to a big, large bushel) together with hot muffins, corn-bread, and sizzling, aromatic coffee. Best of all was the Lake Superior trout. John ate it like a young San Francisco seal from which all victuals had been, for a very long time, withheld. He also talked as he ate—talked or made inquiries, those inquiries whereby he had so often become the cause of informing speech in others. Talked of trade, of epidemics, of leprosy and earthquakes, and (blushing violently) of love, and of all the other plagues and scourges of humanity. Mostly, though, he talked of Duluth. “What do *I* think of Duluth? A city of a million beautiful noises. Yes, but that’s because you’ve got used to them and do not hear them any more. Here, a bell. There, a whistle. Almost everything. Torrent of jabbering humanity, too, from all the nations of the earth: Finns, Swedes, Italians; square-headed Germans and grinning colored folk and born Americans and everybody. I know them. We, too, have a melting-pot at Safe Center, Iowa—only, of course, on a smaller and quieter scale. Sound of tin and steel and asphalt pavement, throb of myriad voices.” He felt very poetically descriptive. “But the whole roar full of people! Some rich, some poor; some mean, some meaner; some sad, some glad; some strong, some weak; some sinful and some pure. But the best thing here is the quiet

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Lake, the Lake and its infinite suggestion of service to the world. Your phrase, Miss La Croix. No, I *thank* you for it. True, the expression has been overused; but the thing itself has been underused abominably. Then the view—the view of ‘service’ up here! No wonder you call Duluth ‘Mount Service.’ ” He could not sufficiently expatiate on that view.

Mother Margaret, sitting silent in her wide wing-chair, listened intent. Exuberant—but that was because of his youth. And curious—but that too was a youthful fault, if fault it was. The world was all magic to John Smith, as yet. So she reflected. Such a man, in some respects, had been, long ago, her husband—Captain La Croix, before he had sunk beneath the waves of Lake Superior with his ship.

And John looked at Jean, thinking: “You are very beautiful. You are also very clean and wholesome and desirable. Life has never shown me before anything that was comparable to you.” Alas, poor John!

Suddenly—prompted perhaps by a bit of subconscious jealousy—John remembered the sign of that other lawyer in Mr. Proteus’ office. What had been the name?—Merle Mulkins. He wondered if Mr. Mulkins was a *very* young man. Being a born questioner, he simply asked.

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"Mr. Mulkins is dead," responded Jean. "I never have seen him. He was a young man when he came into the office (so Miss Banyard has told me) and was, for long, just like a son to Mr. Proteus. And Mr. Proteus has always kept Mr. Mulkins' office just so, allowing no one else to come into it."

The conversation, after this sad topic, became a little muted. Then John, at Mother Margaret's wistful gesture, carried her back to the living room. How she rejoiced in his quickness and strength! Finally she said, laying a hand on the head of her daughter: "I have been too happy today. I shall sooner or later be punished for that."

"That's Mother's Puritan strain," commented Jean.

"Who could be else than happy," questioned John, "not only on this day, but on all the days that ever could come—perched up here on this mighty bluff and looking across Mount Service and down the awful chain of blue lakes with their white and black and yellow steamers, and thinking of the meaning of it all?"

But Mother Margaret answered: "It is glad and happy enough here of mornings (even after a night of sleeplessness and pain) as I watch the red sun rise. But, in the evening, when the sun moves over yonder [she pointed] and I watch the black shadow of the bluff, stealing, even before the sun begins to set,

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on and on, stretching out and out, engulfing the whole city and its mammoth wharves, and the bay and its steamers, and then the awful waste of Gitchee Gumee itself, everything—it is surely sad enough. For it is thus, some day, that the shadow of primeval night will again come, swallowing up the universe. And no stars will then exist to shine. But, as I say, I have been this day too happy.” She looked out at her window. “It is going to storm.”

John looked out at window too. Suddenly, like the blade of a gleaming sword cutting the darkness, a narrow beam of light leaped down into the vast void over Lake Superior. A roar of thunder, shaking the house and even the firm foundations of the big bluff! John thought he had never heard such thunder before. Said Mother Margaret, “The lightning is always much more vivid up here, and the thunder much louder and more reverberant than in the lower city. Everyone notices that. There’s an old crazy man who has found it out in particular. He has made him a dug-out in the vacant lot next door, and, in times of storm, he comes up here from the city, gets into his cave, and mocks and shakes his fist at the spirits of the storm.”

John jumped up. He did not want to talk about Andy, especially to disclose the fact that he had, only that very day, discarded his ancient Iowa clothing. “I must go. I see by my watch that I have

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but one hour left till train-time. Besides—the rain.”

But Mother Margaret: “Though it’s raining in Wisconsin now, the storm is moving away from us. About midnight (I have watched these things) it will come back here to rage for many hours. If it comes sooner, it will go away quickly.”

John was obdurate. He promptly shook hands with both the women. Jean went to the front door with him. There John, moved by a sudden impulse, repeated the burden of Jean’s former song: “Come on along! Come on along!”

“Can you spare me, Mother, till I go to the car with Mr. Smith, pointing out along the way some of the bluff’s beauties? They are seen best by night.”

She went. And John, under the magic influence of her descriptive tongue, saw much of the lamplit city, almost all the ship-lit harbor, and some of the signal-lighted bridges and railway yards and pillared elevators—for the bins looked like pillars. All of a sudden, Jean: “There! The Diamond Necklace! I’m so glad we can see it, spite of the mist of the oncoming storm. That’s the Great Northern’s—the largest ore dock in the world. With its hundreds of lights, it seems, truly enough, at this great distance, like a gorgeous, gigantic necklace round the sable throat of—of—”

“Never mind the rest,” suggested John, somewhat ungallantly. “The thing itself!”

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"And look at the mountains behind them! When the shimmer of lightning comes again—the clouds that are like incredible mountains!"

There was a distant shimmer, and behold, for one brief moment made immemorially illuminate, a vast range of mountains of dream! Cordillera after cordillera, peak after peak, they opened to view. To John it seemed as if he had lost all consciousness of reality, stepping within the infinite—whereunto the scene before him had been only as a secret door.

They took each other by the hands, then, unconsciously, and, like children, walked on.

"You must go back," admonished John, after a considerable time. "It is surely going to storm soon." But he did not relinquish her hand. A drop of rain struck his cheek.

"I will see you to the first stair," replied Jean. "For you mustn't go back down the bluff by the way you came. You've seen 'The Diamond Necklace,' now you must go down into the city by 'The Golden Stair.'"

He looked up into the dome of night. Some of the lower clouds were moving slowly toward the Lake. Others, in a far loftier region, were swiftly rushing away from it and across the great bluff. Into gaps between one and another of the lower and more slowly moving clouds, the soft radiance of the city shone, picking out the deeper depths with silver con-

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trusted on gloom, and etching the whole into John's spirit.

"Here we are at last," said Jean, "at the beginning of the stair. I'll just go down the first flight with you. It's really not a stair, but a steep sidewalk through the side of a private yard. Now we'll go a block along a driveway—so—the Boulevard. And here's the first flight of The Golden Stair proper—a whole block of steps, a hundred and fifty-six treads, in fact, all told. You never could have found this stair without me. The lower cases are a little safer than this top one."

There was something in the voice that John had never heard in anyone's voice before. Then it came to him, all of a jolt, that Jean loved him. He felt a sharp quickening of his already very great happiness, as if he had been touched by a keen breath out of heaven. His heart ached with the poignancy of it all—this first sweet love of a true woman that had ever come into his life. Perhaps it was also the first love which Jean had felt for anyone. It seemed to him, then, that he had known Jean always, that, too, he had always loved her, that nothing could ever separate them, that their love should forever endure.

Great blocks of rugged trap-rock, he thought, rose from the earth, time after time, on either hand, threatening like demons, as they passed on down the stairway. The night grew darker, spite of the city

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lights. The air itself seemed to thicken. Still they continued to descend. John wondered how Jean would ever get back into her nest on high. Yet he did not try to send her back. He believed, at times, that they were walking down a steeply inclined wooden sidewalk, instead of a giddy stair. At long length they reached the dark mass of the courthouse, went round that, also round the soldiers' monument. Then past the post office, a hotel, an office building, a drug-store, and across gleaming Superior Street.

All at once—a frightful crash of thunder. Jean, startled, put up a hand and grasped at her throat. Something rang, bounced and tinkled over the sidewalk.

John leaped, caught the bright thing on the second rebound.

Just one glance he gave it. Saw it was a chain with a locket attached. The lid had broken away from the locket, and John beheld—just as plainly as he saw the pallid countenance of his companion—snugly ensconced within the body of the locket, a tiny photograph of his cousin, Claud Tyrone.

It was altogether an ironical, blasé, cynical, and almost criminal countenance that looked up at him. John gazed and gazed again, glancing meanwhile and with silent questioning down into the eyes of Jean.

Jean, to all appearance, was quite as dumbfounded

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as John. But John possessed an immense quantity of inexperience, with, besides, an altogether too great sensitiveness. He did not read Jean's face as anything else than a mere mask, a subtle affectation of consternation and innocence.

He started to question her about the locket. Felt that he had no right to do this. Recalled Mr. Proteus' statement that Claud was a very undependable and licentious young man. Stammered. She, in return, stammered also. "I—I—John—I didn't—I didn't know—"

Then John did the foolishhest thing he had done in all his life. As he gave the locket back to Jean, he observed, very sweetly: "You must hurry home. Otherwise you'll get the libertine's picture wet."

Jean stepped back almost as if he had struck her. Then she turned, and began to run.

He called after her. "Jean! Jean! O Jean, I—I don't know— Jean!"

But Jean ran on.

CHAPTER VII
MR. PRESSIOR, OF SUPERIOR

CHAPTER VII

MR. PRESSIOR, OF SUPERIOR

JOHN caught his train just in time. The old watch had been slow.

No sooner had he taken his seat in the Pullman car than the train moved away. He heard the whistle, the clanging bell, saw the gliding lights of Duluth, all as if in a sad dream. Only once did he glance up at the bluff. Then he sighted the mounting car on the Incline Railway, and, with a clutching agony at his heart, looked down again and closed his heavy eyes. For one terrible moment he wished that he was closing them forever.

The seat in front of him was, of course, turned toward him, so that whoever should sit within it would be riding backward. Nevertheless, a small thin man, about the size of a cup of weak tea, but carrying three or four heavy satchels, came in and sat down in the seat. John had reserved the entire section for himself, but he had heard of the liberal custom of the road, and did not object to this encroachment on his territory. Neither did he attempt to enter into talk with the small, thin man.

For some reason John began to wish, spite of his sadness, that a porter would come in, and, passing

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through the car, as one had done on the train from Safe Center, Iowa, would cry stentoriantly: "Dinner now ready in the dining car!" But, for some strange reason, no porter came. John, therefore, did not stir.

When the train had stopped in Superior, a large fat man entered, and, seeing the little thin fellow, sat down beside him. "Pleasant day."

"Not at night." Then, as if to make amends: "Name's Jones—merchant—Florida."

The fat man was not to be outdone. "Pressior—realtor—Superior."

The small man made big eyes. He seemed in fact to be nettled. "What do you people up here at the Head-of-the-Lakes (if that's the name of it) call yourselves—Chippewas or Dakotas?"

The realtor, after one brief moment, was equal to the job. "Some of us call ourselves, 'The Plain Dwellers,' some of us 'The Cliff Dwellers.' We're all of us 'The Sail-and-Rail-Folks' and 'The People of Destiny.' When we get very earnest, we take this name: 'The Service People.' We, you know, give service to the world."

Alas he was off! John, who had seen his type even in Safe Center, Iowa, groaned inwardly, turned to the ebony pane, and closed his eyes again.

"Just last year," went on Mr. Pressior, realtor, "9283 vessels arrived in and departed from the Duluth-Superior harbor. These vessels had a net

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registry of over 35,000,000 tons. Largest tonnage of any port in the world, except Liverpool. The wheat and the flour alone that we ship would justify our slogan of 'Service to the World.' And then, in addition, just take iron. 80 percent of the steel that forms the bones, the skeleton, of New York City, is shipped from Superior-Duluth. Then the potatoes and the butter and the ice-cream and the cheese! Also the lumber! Why, the lumber we ship to New York—say, we *build* New York. And then we feed it, and, after a little, we're going to take its harbor away from it. Plank it down at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River just where we want it, and use it there ourselves. And I've not been talking of the things we receive from the East and transmit to the west of us. Only the things we receive from the West, or else make here, and then send out to the wide world.

"So. Then we're talking now of receipts from the East. Take coal. Our receipts of the dusky diamonds—"

"Proctor Knott made a lot of fun of you, didn't he? Called you 'The Zenith City of the Unsalted Seas'?"

"No. Outsiders think so. But that was Dr. Thomas Foster, of Duluth. He was *booming* us. The population of Duluth then was only 3500. Now—" He made a wide gesture.

"Been here long?"

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"Since the water was turned into the Lake. I was here in the Big Boom, also here in the Big Panic. I lived on fish and blueberries for a considerable number of years." He pulled his vest down, raised his head a trifle. "Done better since."

"Big rivalry, I suppose, between these two cities?"

There was momentary silence. John looked up. The small man seemed to him even smaller than before. Why should the realtor wish to impress this man? "Yes, there is rivalry—a foolish, absurd, ridiculous, and harmful rivalry. Yet there's a bridge—there are several bridges—between these two towns. You'd think, to hear some folks talk, that this was Alaska, and that that was New Zealand. Price o' lots! People live there and work here. People live here and work there. People live here and trade there. People live there and trade here. And yet the business men of each of these cities are always scared to death for fear the other place will secure some valuable thing that *it* hasn't got. And so, much harm results. Dollars and dollars, it's all one place! Yes, and it's all one people.

"And such a people! Say, do you know that people are molded by the physical environment in which they live? That's true. There's not a man, woman or child in these two cities—in all this whole Arrowhead country—whose life is not to some extent shaped and moulded by the Lake—by *all* of the

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lakes, by the whole lake system and its far connections with the sea and with the world. Our people, *any* people, are just the outgrowth of their environment. Our nerves are strong because of our tonic breezes. Large and large-minded we are, just as the lakes themselves are large, and with a broad, far-reaching figurative outlook over the world like the actual physical outlook from the great bluff.—You've been visiting in Duluth?"

"Yes. Found it pretty steep place, too—I mean physically as well as financially. Heard some good stories about its steepness. One fellow said he didn't like his neighbor, so he always threw his slops down the neighbor's chimney, and put out his fire."

"Heard the one about the fellow sliding down from the post office corner?"

"No." There was encouragement in the tone.

"Well, you know how steep it is from the post office to the corner of the Lyceum building? One day a fellow comes out of the post office and starts for the Lyceum. He hasn't gone far—it's winter and the sidewalk is covered with ice—when he slips and falls. Away he goes sliding and gliding, lickety-split, along that icy sidewalk. Half way down the block, he sees a lady in front of him, but he cannot stop. So, to keep from hitting the lady with his feet, he spreads his legs apart, and, when he picks her up, she just sits down in his lap. She throws her arms

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round his neck, to keep from falling off, and, as she says, 'Pardon me, if I'm a total stranger,' away the two of them go like lightning for the Lyceum.

"Pretty soon they hits the electric light pole at the Lyceum corner, and comes to a stand.

" 'All out!' cries the fellow. 'Change cars for Woodland Avenue, Morgan Park, and all intermediate points!' "

John got up and had the porter make his berth. A little later, as he pressed his aching face deeply into the little pillow, he heard Mr. Pressior, the realtor, from Superior, again: "This mighty new land, this enormous hinterland of Lake Superior, with its vast timber forests, with its greatest and finest iron deposits in all the world—" John began to be aware that the train had come to a standstill. He shot his curtain up, and looked out. They seemed to be standing in an endless railroad yard. Bright electric lights irradiated the scene, and string after string of cars stretched far and near with names denoting their assemblage from the ends of a continent—Chicago and Great Western; Grand Trunk Pacific; Southern Pacific; Boston and Maine; Pere Marquette; Iron Mountain, Oklahoma and Gulf; Mexican National; Canadian National, and so on.

He heard again Mr. Pressior, the realtor: " . . . its topaz seas of ripening grain, its growing millions of people. Why, THIS is the SPOUT of all this

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cornucopia—here, Duluth-Superior, Head City. Yes, sir; we can build the homes and the business blocks of all the world, and then provide their inmates with sustenance and entertainment.

“Take just one thing. Take drinking-water. Did it ever occur to you what it is to have at your door a well that can’t go dry? And then to think that that well contains the purest and most sparkling beverage—”

The train had struck up again, and the realtor’s voice became a portion of the general and inarticulate uproar.

John was very glad. He wanted to sleep, sleep, sleep. To sleep and also to forget.

CHAPTER VIII

ENTER THE DUKE OF DULUTH

CHAPTER VIII

ENTER THE DUKE OF DULUTH

BUT it was hours and hours before he fell asleep. And in those sleepless hours he thought of many things, underwent numerous psychologic changes. Jean was not the girl he had thought her. This monstrous and all-depressing theme went crying and developing through his brain like the endless burden of a madman's song. Or was he, could he, be mistaken? She had seemed so innocent, so pure. And the companion of a debauchee? No, he was *not* mistaken. She had tried to make him believe she had not known what was in the locket. A beautiful story, that! Hum! Women were all deceivers. He had heard the statement more than once; now he began to believe it.

And, because women were deceivers, he was good and done with women forevermore. He would devote his energies hereafter to other things, content his hungry soul with them. A cynic too he would be—a keen, cutting, cruel, relentless and remorseless cynic. That's what he would become.

He would always be a bachelor. He had plenty of money to keep his own establishment, to hire all the housekeepers and domestic servants he needed.

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Or, he could have his mother for his housekeeper. In fact, why not get his own establishment now, just so soon as he should arrive in Granville?

And he would not be over-particular in Granville with whom he associated. As a cynical, disappointed man, it was perfectly appropriate and right that he should not be too exacting about the character of his companions. He would see the world, especially the seamy side thereof. He had known the other side well enough in Iowa. He would make acquaintance now with the underworld, the darker phases of humanity. There was no use to palter, trifle or hesitate. Better to know the truth at once about this sad, bitterly disappointing thing called humanity. The knowledge had to come some time, this most distressing acquaintance with evil as well as good. He thought of a Minneapolis flour sign which he had seen all over Duluth—"Eventually, why not now?"

Nor would he, for a single moment, shun his cousin. Why should he shun Claud? If he cared nothing for Jean (and he assured himself that he didn't—not even one tiniest, most infinitesimal particle) then why on earth should he hold Jean's attachment for Claud against Claud? Had he himself not been just about to cut Claud out with Jean, when he had thought her worth the trouble? He hoped that Claud would not hold this fact against

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him. Moreover, Claud could probably introduce him to the kind of life he was wanting to see—the bitter, degraded, even criminal, life of a vast city. He, John, would peer down into the sediment which lies at the bottom of the human heart. There should be no hatred, no abasement, no absolute and most hopeless deterioration which he should not know. And, as a result, his sensitive, over-sentimental soul should never again be happy.

Of course he would be a scholar—a bitter, remorseless, sceptical, world-renowned and world-hardened scholar. He noticed that the sounds of the wheels began to tune in with this thought. “Bookety-book-book! Bookety-book-book!”

Suddenly he awoke to find himself gazing into a deep blue sky. A hand, at that moment, reaching into his berth, seized his arm and shook it. “Twenty minutes to Chicago!” cried the porter.

John looked lower down through his window. He was actually entering the outskirts of a populous city. He almost jumped into his clothes, and, having made a hand-and-face ablution, gave the porter a dollar, and, reaching the station platform, hired an attendant to carry his satchel to the Parmalee bus.

But when he had arrived at the station of the Granville and Eastern line, he found that he had still one whole hour to wait. Breakfast eaten in the

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station (and what a breakfast—just like coaling again!) he went for a stroll about the city. From time to time he glanced at his big, thick watch. Strange how slowly time moves when one possesses an abundance of leisure. Again he looked. The watch had stopped running: he had forgotten to wind it on the night before. No wonder! He hailed a passerby and learned the exact time, then ran like a deer to the Granville and Eastern station.

Too late. Gate closed and train in motion. The guard sneered, "Better take a special train now." "I will," said John, simply. "Where do you get specials?" Duly instructed, he soon had his special train, and was on his swift way to Granville and its famous university. Though he would not have admitted the fact even to himself, there was a great joy in his soul at the thought of pulling into the Granville depot before Claud—ah yes, before everybody—in his own special train. At the first stop, therefore, John got out and sent this telegram:

Josiah Brown,
President, Granville University,
Campus, Granville.

DEAR SIR: Expect to enter your university as soon as I arrive. Sorry I could not come sooner, but was unavoidably detained. Meet me at station. Expect to do hard work, and be no discredit to your school.

JOHN SMITH.

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Then he wired a copy to Claud, asking him to accompany the President to the train.

He had hardly taken his seat in the car again, when he saw two men pacing the station platform to and fro. One was a large, thick-set, heavy fellow, yet with the lithe, tapering trunk of an athlete. His face, smooth shaved, was bold and deeply graven; the nose long and hooked; the eyes cold, steely gray; the mouth a mere sharp slit. Altogether, the picture of a man whose soul was that of the Devil—remorseless, indomitable, self-seeking without limit. This man was probably fifty years of age.

The other person was somewhat younger. He was a thin, ascetic, scholarly-looking man, slender and short, and, it would seem, very fragile. His face was pear-shaped, the bulging portion of the pear being his forehead, and the little round part at the stem, his chin. The stem itself was his neck. His eyes were large and round and full of the wonder and magic of sweet dreams. John saw him stop and look up at the big fellow, spreading out his hands as if in supplication. Then John heard the self-seeker's rich, easily carrying voice: "If I can't get to Granville by twelve o'clock today, I'll do nothing either for you or for anybody else." He wound up by cursing bitterly the luck that had made him miss the Granville Limited.

"Tried to get a special, Mr. Governor?"

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"Specials all out. I *have* tried. If I cannot reach the Capitol Building in Granville by twelve fifteen, then I—"

John could hear no more, but he did not think it necessary. He left his car and approached the Governor.

"Mr. Governor," he proffered, "I chanced to overhear you saying that you wanted to reach Granville by noon, but that you could not get a special train. This is *my* special. I had to take it because I had missed the regular, and because, if I didn't get to Granville by twelve o'clock sharp today, I couldn't matriculate this year in Granville University. You are welcome, Mr. Governor, you and your friend also, to ride in my train."

The Governor was pleased but condescending. "Mr.—ah—I really forget the name."

"Smith," suggested John. "Just Smith, plain John Smith."

"Ah yes! Mr. Smith. This is one of the teachers in your university." The teacher made a slight grimace, but was very cordial to John. "Let us get aboard, gentlemen," suggested the Governor.

They boarded the train, and were off.

John, at first, tried to sit with the very distinguished pair, and to take some part in their exalted conversation. But, inasmuch as they merely addressed their remarks, also their questions and

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answers, to each other, and, in addition, continually spoke of people and of things concerning whom and which John possessed no sort or kind of knowledge, he soon began to perceive that he had faded from their thoughts, and become, to all intents and purposes (excepting merely as a provider of accidental and free transportation) non-existent. He did not blame the men for this: they were simply wrapped up in some other subject than him. He went to the farthest corner of the coach, and sat alone.

Closing his eyes, he tried to think of Granville and its university. But, somehow, he could not even imagine how those great things might appear. Only Duluth would arise in his mind—Duluth, “The Zenith City of the Unsalted Seas,” the “City of Destiny,” “The Queen of Many Waters.”

He saw himself once more as he had awakened in a Duluth hotel (just day before yesterday morning too) a very poor and almost prospectless young man. He contrasted that young man with a certain wealthy chap whom he now knew, and who, at the present moment, was riding on a special train—snubbed, truly enough, but rich beyond the dreams of avarice. And, by the shades of Gould and Vanderbilt, not to be snubbed forever.

Then he saw Duluth again, “the most strategic, most human and most cosmopolitan of all young cities.” So he had read about the place on the front

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of a newspaper in Safe Center, Iowa. Once again he beheld, in retrospect, the roaring, rushing crowd: flaxen-haired and stocky Swedes; flaxen-haired and slender Norwegians; square-jawed, square-headed Germans; square-shouldered, loose-jointed Russians; Jews, Rumanians, Lithuanians, Finns, a few negroes, French Canadians, native Americans from Iowa and Nebraska and from all the other states that Walt Whitman had catalogued so euphoniously. And behind them all, the vast background!

Great masses of trap-rock seemed in fact to be passing him again, as he slid up the bluff on the Incline Railway. "Here we are!" they appeared to cry. "Behold! This is the kind of material on which Duluth is founded. It will last forever and forever."

Then he beheld himself once more, as he stood, now outside the Incline car, on the very edge of the bluff, looking out into the enormous void that stretched away under the blue dome for hundreds and hundreds of square miles. He gazed at the nearest steamer—a mere toy. Yet he could see—so crystal clear and full of magic was the atmosphere—the straight, purposeful prow; the yellowish wisp of smoke at the slant funnel's top; even the light aglint on thin wires.

Then he walked to and fro, and to and fro again, trying in vain to think of something to say which should be grand enough to express the emotions of

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his soul. From a lonely distance—over in Superior, or it might be Fond du Lac—echoed the midget whistle of a departing freight train. Then that of another. Of yet another still. Sweetest piano music came up from the sides of the bluff, from the houses over whose roofs he was looking. All at once—

He was gazing into the azure mystery of *her* eyes. He was drinking it all in, thinking it somehow— Paw! What kind of cynic was this, riding on his own special train, and oathbound to a life of bitterness and purely intellectual scholarship? “Bookety-book-book! Bookety-book-book!”

He attempted to banish from his heart the image of Jean by visualizing once more, instead of Jean, the mighty cloud mountains he had seen over across the bay and just above the Wisconsin line—mountains so high and wild, so adapted to fierce brigandage! Suppose that he and Jean— Paw! “Bookety-book! Bookety-book!”

All at once—the sunset! He had never seen the bay by sunset, but he imagined, nevertheless, that the water of the bay beneath him was turning into a vast sheet of blood. What did that signify?

And there was Jean again. With infinite tenderness in her eyes she looked upon him. He instinctively reached forth both his hands, and started to go to her. But she waved to him imperatively to go back, and then ran away.

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He arose and rubbed his weary eyes, trying to see clearly once more the Governor and the Professor. Instead—hundreds of feet below him floated or darted busy units of commerce over a vast blue Lake.

“Paw!” shouted John, aloud. “I said, ‘Paw!’ ”

The Governor and the Professor looked suddenly up. Then they talked on in voices so loud that all their words came plain and sharp to John over the noises of the train.

John could not help hearing. Surely, if people talked like that—

The Professor, at first, had the floor. “They say that his influence extends straight into your office.” This he cried very shrilly and wrathfully. “They say he can do anything he likes. *That’s* what they say! And they say, too, that he’s the agent-in-chief for all the crooks in the whole commonwealth.”

“What do they say about *me*?” The Governor was loud too, but cooler.

“They say your chief graft is to help poor devils out of prison, and then to get them and all their friends and relatives to working for you politically. These crooks belong to you body and soul. You don’t let them out except conditionally. Then they belong to you body and soul. If they do the slightest thing against your interests, you can have them back behind the bars within twenty-four hours and with added penalties. They even say you could have

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them knocked in the head and stuck under the ground, and yet you'd never be responsible for it."

"Is that all they say?" The Governor, laying his head back, laughed a cold, contemptuous ululation. "I *must* have a machine," he concluded. "Can't do things in the way they cannot be done. Well—there's my [he did not say "our"] destination."

John looked the way the Governor pointed. At a distance of two or three miles, a vast golden dome was swimming in the air. That, according to pictures which John had seen, must be the State House. A little beyond the dome was another, possibly as large and of a very light pink tint. That, as he guessed, was the top of Central Hall, the building wherein he hoped to register. He looked at his watch—eleven thirty-five.

The train, of a sudden, slowed quietly down and stopped. They were now in the suburbs of Granville. How still everything was! Over in a little, unpainted house, somebody began in a rich, thick, molasses-candy contralto: "Just a lit-tle love, just a lit-tle kiss." Would the train never start again?

The Governor arose angrily, went into the forward coach, at once came back.

Then the train, as if possessed by a demon, started up, ran like mad for a mile or more, and rattled with boisterous finality into a great, echoing and very much overcrowded station.

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John looked out. Yes, there was Claud! He was standing on a high box. But there too (very, very obviously) were hundreds and unaccountable hundreds of other students. What did all that mean, such an immense crowd? With an angry and yet fearfully beating heart, he observed a lofty white and scarlet banner, carried by a hideous clown. The legend on the banner ran—

HE IS COMING TO OUR UNIVERSITY—
THE DUKE OF DULUTH!

John began vaguely to realize the situation: he should not have sent those messages. The band struck up a loud and horribly discordant strain. The tune was, "Hail to the Mighty!" John's heart stopped pounding, gave one big jump, and lay for a time quite still, somewhere up in his throat, just at the most inconvenient spot. Then he saw another gay banner. It read—

PREXY COULD NOT COME, BUT HE SENDS
SINCERE REGRETS TO HIS GRACE,
THE DUKE

There were other banners still, but John did not read them.

The Governor came to him with huge, outstretched hands. "Mr. Smith, you've saved our lives," he asseverated. Then, after a moment's hesitation:

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"You've been very good to us, John. Come and ride in my car: it'll be waiting at the station. After it leaves me in the State House, it'll take you and our friend here over to Central Hall. There'll still be time to register."

John accepted the invitation. The conductor himself came in, and carried out their suitcases. John, going out with his friends, stood for one brief, terribly embarrassed moment on the exalted platform, in the midst of a chaos of sound, surveying the sea of bright, young, wide-open faces. All of a sudden those faces changed expression. Came then an appalling silence. Each and every student countenance was gazing steadily and earnestly at the Governor, not at John. Then the words, "Governor Sprucebody" and "President Brown," went whisperingly about, here and there, throughout the multitude. Something like a tonic-dash of cool water went up and down John's spine. He felt himself grinning.

The Governor had, in fact, mounted a stool, and, mistaking the gathering for one in his own honor (he ignored both John and the President) began to speak. The speech was not a long one, but it was greatly to the point. "The Scholar in Politics," that was his mighty theme. And, as he spoke, this born orator showed in a lightning flash all the bitter tragedy of greed, of treachery, of lust, of crime, of

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self-seeking. Almost like a veritable second Christ he spoke to these young men in whose faces were mingled expressions of rapture and chagrin.

And while the students were still standing about, uncertain what to do, the Governor took John and the President by their arms, and, with bowed head, as if he still were impressed by the sublimity of his own talk, marched them through the silent lane which the students instinctively formed for them. And so to his car.

The mob of students pensively followed, and John had all the satisfaction of seeing them see him, as he entered the luxurious limousine of the Governor, in company with President Brown.

John looked back from the window for a final triumph. The mob of young men still appeared to be very much impressed, also crestfallen. The mighty band was for some reason silent. All the banners, too, had disappeared. Sweetly smiling, John tipped his hat to the boys, and, just before he turned to speak once more and confidentially to President Brown, shouted to the multitude: "My Grace is very glad to have met you."

CHAPTER IX
SCALIGERA

CHAPTER IX

SCALIGERA

WHEN John had registered (which he did all alone, and knew the reason why) he ought, in all conscience, to have gone straight forth on a hunt for a boarding-house, for he had just been informed by the registrar that the dormitories were full. But the life of the city called to him with much too clear and alluring a voice. After luncheon, therefore, he set out with a high and beating heart in search of city adventure. Most of all he wanted to see the slums.

Yes, indeed! How be a cynic of the deepest dye, without a full and despondent knowledge of the slums?

But, somehow, he failed to find the slums. For one thing, he did not like to ask his way to them. For another, there was such a vast, almost infinite, quantity of respectable business forever confronting him. He turned this way, turned that. But, always before him, stretched on and on the busy streets, the well dressed people, the acres and acres of clear plate glass in which the happy shoppers were reflected. Of a sudden he beheld a little lane, above the entrance to which depended a black and scarlet

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sign: "One Way Traffic." Ah—this must be the road to the slums!

The very legend, "one way traffic," seemed symbolical. It was about like, "He who entereth here, let him leave hope behind." Best of all, the lane darkly turned and twisted and twisted yet again. This, plainly, was not a "straight and narrow path." Then—

Before he knew it, John was standing in front of a bookshop window. Such a bookshop! O the vellum and the fine tree calf! Dear old authors, too, in Latin and in Greek! There was even a "Breeches" Bible. Wonderful incunabula, four or five centuries old, and curious Low Latin manuscripts plainly much older. Adventure indeed! He often had heard of such things, but had scarcely thought of them as hard realities.

As if he were doing some terrible wrong, he entered the shop, and, trying to act like one accustomed to the daily transaction of such business, bought the "Breeches" Bible. This prize having been laid aside "to be called for," he paid the bill with new cash.

Then he began looking round the room for further intellectual delicacies. His mental mouth watered as he caught sight of a large collection of old manuscripts. He was not good at Latin, but he managed to translate a page or two of an odd volume of Columella.

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Of a sudden he happened to recall that, not many years before, his father, on a certain rainy day in the carpenter shop, had given him a long talk on this same ancient agricultural writer. John laid the book reverently down, and began wiping his cynical eyes. He would have this book, whatever its price.

Then he began to perceive, even through all his tearful mist, that a strange—a *very* strange—young woman had picked his volume up, and was reading it.

Said she to the attendant, as she looked at the price mark: "I will take this. Send the bill to my father, please, Professor Van Dusen."

But John could not give the volume up easily. "I'd picked that for myself," he objected, in a rasping voice.

The lady turned and stared at him—steadily, almost indignantly, yet not quite with her full power of attention. He had previously noticed that the back of her head ran straight up from her neck. He now observed, as she squarely faced him, that she had a low but bulging forehead, swelling grandly at the temples like some old Praxitelean statue. Her skin was a pale, a very pale, ivory; it bore no trace of powder or paint. Her nose was clean-chiseled, Greek-like. Her hair resembled a sheaf of Attic sunbeams, and her eyes—some vestal virgin, he believed, must surely have had such lambent orbs.

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He began to feel less repugnance for Miss Van Dusen.

Very, very slowly the lady's eyes quit looking in part afar and awoke wholly to the present. "You!" She was almost astonished. "*You* picked that book, you—so young?"

John repeated that he had certainly selected the volume.

"But *I* have *bought* it." An air of the whole thing being over.

"But that's a book my father loved. I—I—can't very well—I had thought—"

"You mean that the volume possesses for yourself certain personal, because paternal, associations?"

John eagerly assured her that it did that.

"But, for *me*, it is associated with the dative case." She looked victorious. John, in rapidly mounting anger at her seeming selfishness, opened his lips and was again about to speak.

She fully explained. "I am Scaligera Van Dusen, daughter of Professor Alexander von Humboldt Van Dusen of this university, and head of the Classical Department. I am working for the Ph.D., and my thesis is 'The Latin Dative in the Thirteenth Century.' It's much too wide a subject, but I expect to devote my whole life to it, and our family is noted for longevity. Moreover, my thesis is only expected to be an outline of the subject, a mere brief, preliminary synopsis."

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Her eyes were glowing with strange light. She was, in John's rapidly wavering estimation, oddly sincere and somewhat attractive. He began to believe he might be going to love her at some time. His heart beat terribly at that thought.

She continued speaking, and, strangely enough, seemed to have forgotten the Columella. She merely rambled, rambled, on and on, concerning the unspeakable beauties of the dative case, in particular as these had appeared to her in neglected volumes of the later Middle Ages. Suddenly she bethought her of the Columella again. Columella, though a classical writer, was *here* expressed by a copyist not in classical, but in medieval, Latin. Did the gentleman understand now why she specially wanted the book? She again rambled. John kept looking at her eyes and began to know himself for lost.

Then it came to him with a pang that he was turning traitor to Jean. Ah Jean, Jean! What a woman was Jean! After all, though, had he not forsworn Jean? Or, rather, had he ever owed the slightest allegiance to the little lady of Duluth?

A clock near by spoke with crystal tongue. Miss Van Dusen started. "One or two?" She was asking an attendant. "Two." "Two? Strange that Mr. Tyrone is not here! He was to have met me at 1:30, and to have taken me home with my purchases. And at two I had a class—" She seemed to have

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forgotten John. "Wrap up the Columella." The attendant wrapped it up, John this time not protesting. "I'm really glad you got the Columella," he volunteered and with truth.

The feminine devotee of scholarship, however, merely shook her head as if she were dragging from the depths of her long gone psychic experiences something that did not look pleasing to her. "Late! Inexplicably late!"

The quiet of the street was suddenly shattered by a rakish red roadster that teetered perilously around the corner of an opposite block and shivered to a sudden standstill with a shriek of brakes. It was running in the wrong direction, too, along this one-way street.

A tall, sleekly handsome young chap leaped out of the car and ran into the shop. "My heart," he cried, "throbs with pain, Miss Van Dusen, at being so late.—Who's this? Do you know who this fine young gentleman is, my much neglected Scaly?"

Scaligera was kind enough to reply that, though she did not really possess the pleasure of the fine young gentleman's acquaintance, she had no doubt that he was a fine young gentleman, also that she had had the great felicity of an hour's delightful and scholarly intercourse with him. "He likes," said she, in conclusion, "the dative case a great deal."

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"Well," explained Claud, "he's my cousin-in-law, the Duke of Duluth."

John began hating Claud with cool, steady hate.

"What!" exclaimed Scaligera, to John. "Are you in fact a nobleman?"

"He's really John Smith, of Corn Center, Iowa, where the maize grows sixteen feet in diameter—"

"Height," corrected Scaligera, seriously.

"Height. And where all that grows is very, very green."

John thought it better to take the crude jest in good part, and pointed contemptuously at his own breast by way of reply.

"He owns about a billion dollar's worth of property in Duluth," continued Claud. "Hence, in that city, he carries the shining appellation of 'The Jook,' or 'Joke.' Permit me to introduce, or introjook—Er—Miss Van Dusen, I wish to present you to his Royal Nibs, or his Graceful Graciousness and Imperial Corporosity, the Duke of Duluth."

Scaligera, giving John her hand, murmured abstractedly: "'Duluth'? Where do we get that word? Ah! 'Du' is a combination of the preposition 'de' meaning 'of' with 'le' meaning 'the.' It is, therefore—ah yes, it is in the dative case—possibly the ablative." She drew forth a blank book, and a little silver pencil; made a note; returned the book and pencil to her pocket.

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Claud began expounding on his own account. " 'Duluth' is not really from the French, but from the Latin—which sets it one peg higher. In the Latin (the name was given to the place by Father Hennepin) 'Du' means 'from,' or 'without,' and 'luth' 'salt'—in reference, of course, to the city's standing on the shore of the unsalted sea."

John was tired of the nonsense. To stop it, he said, majestically: "*Animus et prudentia; festina lente; sic semper tyrannis*; in onions there is strength. And now, if his Majesty's Cap-and-bells will take his Royal Highness (meaning me) to a good safe bank, and there introduce him so that some of the billions above referred to may be safely deposited, and thereafter, from time to time, be drawn upon to pay, perchance, some of the said Cap-and-bells' gambling debts—"

Claud immediately burned scarlet, but had to take his medicine. Equal to the occasion, he bowed and declared: "Your Most Gracious Majesty could make no better use of the money."

But Scaligera, without a smile at either of the wordy contestants, proposed: "We might as well proceed to the bank at once, Mr. Tyrone. I cannot now make that two o'clock class."

The introduction at the bank having been duly performed and an account having been properly opened for John, Scaligera insisted that they all

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should walk back to the campus. Claud, therefore, put up his car in a neighboring garage. John had already got possession of Scaligera's parcels, and these he carried.

But he certainly could not outtalk Claud. In fact whenever he tried to say anything, although in the best of English, Scaligera gazed at him with slack chin and round, astonished eyes, as if he had said things incomprehensible.

But when Claud, with his shocking slang, burst into the talk—like a dirty hammer, thought John, beating on loud iron—Scaligera was all attention. Claud rolled a cigaret behind him and with one hand. "Let not your right hand," explained he, "know what your left hand rolleth."

"How droll, how exceedingly droll!" murmured Scaligera. "And how interesting, Mr. Tyrone, is all your *patois*, how indubitably fresh and expressive. It is, frankly, a linguistic treat. Through all the length and breadth of it I can perceive a new English language in process of formation."

John saw that her eyes were full of happy glances for Claud. He began to believe she must be in love with that boorish combination of clamor and brass. A pang of half jealousy smote him. Then he remembered his recent vow to live a cynical, defeminized life.

"Your cousin's gone." She was speaking to John again.

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John did not say much to her. What was there for him to say, him the terrible cynic? And what was this he might have said things to? A little glint of hair. A certain lustre of the skin. A kind of grace and shapeliness of body. But, in all that fair flesh, nothing but disappointment.

"Mr. Smith, meet my father, Professor Van Dusen."

They had entered the campus, and John beheld, coming slowly up with a stiff stoop, a short-statured man, thin to very leanness. He had a kindly look in his eye, but no real appearance of well being. The massive, bulging skull seemed much too heavy for the frail neck, the hollow-chested trunk and the bowed legs.

The Professor acknowledged the introduction of John in a low, sweet voice, but with a very absent manner. Then he passed on.

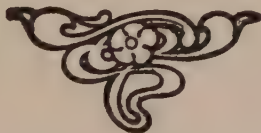
When he was out of sight, Scaligera said: "I must leave you now, Mr. Smith, for it's almost three. Some day, however, I want to talk to you about your cousin, Claud. There's something very important that I ought to tell you about him. I don't believe you like him much. Now, Papa and I are fond of him indeed, and I think that you also should be." She gave him a smile much sweeter than any she had even vouchsafed to Claud, and was off.

When John had set his hat back on his head, he

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walked in a new dream. Scaligera and Claud, he felt very sure, were going to be great factors in his future life. But he did not think at all of old, gray-headed Von Bulow, the bank cashier to whom he had, that day, been introduced.

BOOK II
THE DESCENT TOWARD
AVERNUS



CHAPTER X
THE LUXEMBOURG HOUSE AND THE
SOB STUFF INN

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THE LUXEMBOURG HOUSE AND THE SOB STUFF INN

JOHN went up to the Granville Union, wrote and mailed a letter to his mother.

Then he set out to find a boarding-house. There had been, in the Union, a long list of boarding-houses, tacked to a bulletin-board just inside the front door, and John had copied a number of the addresses of these which—according to one of the students who had been lounging near—would be found the most easily.

But John had grown particular of late, and could not readily discover a house that appeared to him suitable.

Passing from one set of addresses to another, he had occasion to traverse the campus again. All at once, down the diagonal walk, he saw once more Scaligera. He spoke to her very plainly, and removed his hat, but she went silently on, smiling, spectre-like, at nothing.

His anger began to arise. Perhaps, to be sure, she had only been absorbed in the dative. But perhaps, also, she had not wanted to speak to him. Well—he would teach her—some day.

He went on through the campus, and into a very

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fashionable street. He would take the most expensive room he could find, a *set* of rooms, an entire suite of handsome apartments. He would also have him a "man" to meet people, also to show them to his door when he had done talking with them, also to help him bathe and to dress and to do other things that are somewhat laborious.

Then he suddenly stopped. Back from the street, in the midst of spacious grounds and winding roadways, he beheld a stone-and-iron palace. If rooms could only be had in such a mansion as that! He looked at one of the big posts beside the iron-grilled gate. There was a card—not a very large card, and yet a card—upon it.

Going up, he read the card. Thereby he became informed that the palace and grounds had, till recently, belonged to the late Professor Luxembourg, of Granville University itself. Further, that now they were for sale. Further still, that full particulars as to house, price and terms could be had at the office of Barnum and Blank, 66 University Avenue, Granville.

In about three minutes John had seen and brought back with him the realtor, and was going through the iron-grilled gate.

The grounds were like Elysium, John thought, as he and Mr. Barnum walked and wandered all about them. And then, when Mr. Barnum, pushing the

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front door-bell, had brought the Japanese butler to the door, and John was shown all through the echoing mansion, John knew already that the house was his. Well, had he not the money—yes, and much more also? When he saw a little purple fountain in the midst of a secluded court, and heard it rambling on and on to its sweet, esoteric self, talking of scholarly nights and days to be passed in future here beside it, of companionship with other serious-minded students— Ah those studious hours to come, those studious hours!

He bought the house. Back at the realtor's office, he gave check and signed contract, and, at the realtor's suggestion, kept a copy of the contract for himself. Then he called up Claud—for he had found his cousin's telephone number and was bursting with the grand late news. He did not really like Claud (how could he, knowing that Claud's picture was still perhaps at the neck of Jean?) but Claud could help introduce him about the University. As soon as Claud's companions— Well, John would later select his own "high-brow" company, rejecting all other.

When he told Claud about buying the house, Claud's phone was silent for a long time. Then, at length: "So you've bought the Luxembourg property?"

"Yes. Bought it.. Come on over." He told where

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he was. "Come over and I'll take you into the house to dine. The butler and the housekeeper and the cook are all still in the place, and I've hired 'em for six months. Then, say— I'm not very much fatigued yet, and I want to look— Well, I want to discover America—the hitherto unfound portion—"

"I get you," Claud interrupted. "Let's go down to the Stickamagooza—otherwise known as 'The Piecan's Deathtrap,' otherwise as 'The Bucket of Blood,' otherwise still as 'Hell's Melting Point,' and 'The Sob Stuff Inn.'"

"*Why* 'Sob Stuff Inn,' Claud?"

"In honor of sob stuff, the chiefest friend, in fact the savior itself, of all criminals. I'll tell some of the boys first. Then be right over—easiest way."

When they had eaten together and then properly inspected "the ducal palace," they decided to go to the Sob Stuff Inn on foot. It was not, Claud explained, precisely the easiest way to get there. But the street cars didn't run right, and nobody dared to take a valuable limousine into the purlieus of Water Street, especially at night.

On their way to the slums, Claud inquired: "How did you find Duluth, now? Tell me."

"Wonderful."

"Naw. It's a deuce of a place. Climb, climb, climb. Bounded on the north by up, on the south by down. On the east by water, on the west by land that

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might as well be under water for all it's worth to anybody."

John wanted to say that the city he so maligned was bounded all about by iron and wheat and beauty and service—service more beautiful than beauty's very self. But he forbore. For one thing, "service" was Jean's word, therefore not to be employed lightly. Besides, had he not contended in words with Claud already on this very day?

Then Claud, "That La Croix girl's a clever little trick for somebody, don't you think—somebody that'll probably get her in the easiest way?"

John could not even reply. His heart mounted to his throbbing throat, and stayed there.

"She loves me dearly," continued Claud, "as a many has. But—*you* know!" Then he sang, in a rich, clear tenor—

"Try to forget that I forgot you,
Ladies, O my ladies!"

They had just passed into the Bad Lands—as Claud described this portion of the city, and John, observing the mean houses and the still meaner look of the inhabitants, had almost come to a decision to turn back and give up this wild goose chase after cynical experience and the darker, more despondent sides of human life. But now, at Claud's words, he felt an over-mastering wish for cynical hardening

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again. In cynicism, he felt, must lie the soul's full rest. Why should he care for a woman that could love any man like Claud? And he had had circumstantial evidence that Jean probably did love Claud—this in addition to Claud's own words, which might or might not have been mere boasting. And if, as seemed clear, it was folly to care for a girl like Jean, then why not to care for any girl at all? He puckered up his lips and piped a devil-may-care tune. "Women are all rot," he observed, at the close of the piercing melody.

"Right-o," agreed Claud. "So get 'em the easiest way. But why don't you go in for scholarship and all that, Jack—Duke? Old Proteus informed me that you have a hunch that way. Nothing in it (as you probably know) financially, but, seeing that you've got more dough already than you can ever spend, why not emulate, say, Professor Luxembourg? *He* never got *his* Abraham teaching. Shades of rhetoric, what superfluous words! But he was very depressingly dignified, living in a high house like that and teaching the history of early Christian art and other humbugs and dodidoes merely for amusement—just as I play poker. Do you play?—Look out for the drunk!"

John avoided the drunk. No, he didn't play. He did not think he would ever care to play a game like poker.

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"Get drunk?"

"No."

"What the sulphur do you do, then, when Sunday School's over?"

They had come now to a part of the city where even angels might hesitate to enter. The sing-song voice of a negro came lolling across the half-lit street. A pistol shot rang out. Glass fell to the pavement. The singer's voice was silent. Hurrying footsteps sounded in an alley. "Good!" cried Claud.

After another turn, Claud took something bright and ominous-looking from his hip-pocket, and placed it in the right hand side-pocket of his coat. "Good! those fellows got him. Always on the edge of something momentous here!"

A night-walker accosted them. Claud told her to "move on." She told him where *he* could go to.

The blue and brass majesty of the police came by. "Students," said Claud, as if that were all explanatory. The blue and the brass went on, stopped, looked back. "Let me know if you want anything, boys."

Before his cousin could thank the policeman, John saw a gang of big toughs rush from across the street and toward them with a blood-curdling yell. John felt fear like a sharp blade rush into his breast. But Claud yelled too. "Billy! Stilts! Landstrum! Hoop-skirts!" Then each of the newcomers was duly

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presented, with O what mockery of due form, to "his Grace and Royal Majesty, the Dook of Doolooth."

"W'at the pitchfork's Doolooth? Fine old place in England?"

"You said a remark," acquiesced Mr. Tyrone. "It's a county in England on the shore of Lake Superior."

"I know," put in Hoop-skirts, the fat lad. "It's a place where they have dog derbies, the aurora borealis, and snowsnakes."

"What's dog derbies?" inquired Landstrum.

"What's the aurora borealis?" murmured Stilts.

"What's snowsnakes?" questioned Billy.

"They breeds in the snow," explained Hoop-skirts, looking as solemn as a fat man can. "They's ketched, bottled, and shipped to the Sob Stuff Inn. Drink the juice off'n one, an' you can hear him talk. Off'n two, an' you can travel all over the world (like Ulysses) an' never leave your chair. If you can't, I'll sever my teaching connection with Granville University."

To show his sober earnestness, as well as to clinch the exceedingly important remark, he spun round several times, like greased lightning, on a single toe, resembling, the while, because of his flaring hips, a gigantic humming-top. And, as he spun, he hummed, and before closing down to a full rest,

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cried: "Darling Violet, I see you still—but not silent," and rushed away into a foul-smelling lane.

Claud, Stilts, Billy, Landstrum, and John followed immediately.

John noted that the lane extended between two rows of warehouses, walled and roofed with corrugated iron, which, as he could plainly see by the light of an occasional incandescent lamp, hanging under the eaves, was gnawed into rusty-edged holes. All about was a sweetish-sour smell, much, John thought, like that of a dead-house—though he had never smelt, or even seen, a dead-house.

The crowd made a turn or two. A mist was creeping up from the river, rolling through the corpse-colored streets, muffling all the former city sounds, and converting the most open spaces of the streets into secret holes and hiding places. It was delightful. Here and there the fog ran out into streamers, or "ghosts."

John encountered first one obstacle, then another, under his feet. A bundle of rotting clothes, a pile of stones and mud, an old paint-bucket, a broken rocking-chair. At a little distance, a tall, belted and clubbed watcher came out of the mist and crossed the street toward him. John saw him hesitate. "Rah, rah!" whispered Stilts. The watcher went back into the mist.

Now they had stopped before a little door with a

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frosted-glass window, through which light shone. Sacred singing—Salvation Army, probably—"Jesus Lover of My Soul." Then secular music, apparently fiddles and drums, came also through the door—or did it arise in some more distant place of entertainment?

Claud gave a number of taps on the door, and the gang waited.

"Nice, lively district this, I dare say," observed Stilts. "Wouldn't mind living here myself.—Guess they got that nigger."

"Did you see what happened to the nigger?" inquired Claud.

"Yes. They *got* him."

The music died out, and John took a deep breath in the stillness that followed.

Said Stilts, "That was a great scheme you worked on us, Duke, sending that telegram about having Prexy come down to the depot to meet you—and all the while he was there by your side." John merely bowed acknowledgments. "Have Prexy be merciful to me, I pray thy Grace, the next time I flunketh," continued Stilts.

Claud knocked again, the door opened, and the little crowd went into a long, narrow hall which made several turns.

At last the gang came to a wide stairway, and mounted steeply into a large hall.

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At the broad portal, though the four boon companions plunged straightway in, Claud stopped, holding John by the arm. "Look!" he cried. John looked. "*Here's* the wrong side of America," went on Claud. "And yet, how much worse, in truth, is this than the other, the seemingly fairer, side? If a predatory nature has clever brains, it swindles the public (heads drives perhaps, and makes no accounting). If it hasn't, it holds the public up with a pistol on dark streets. That's all the difference."

"Difference or none," answered John, "we've got to have excitement. Without excitement a world like this would surely be dull, threadbare, and [he had not forgotten that he was a cynic] like a fellow in love."

With curling lip, he gazed all over the place, interested and yet rather maturely contemptuous. The hall which lay immediately before him, and which formed the foyer of the Sob Stuff Inn, was plainly a lounging place for unspeakable toughs. It was well-nigh filled with tables, whereat both men and women lounged, smoked, drank, cursed, screamed, and ululated. Some of the men were silent, leaning on tables with faces wrapped in folded arms. John, speaking to Claud, referred to these, then asked: "Sorry or drunk?" "Both."

"Snowbirds here?"

"Snowbirds, jailbirds, blackbirds, night-birds."

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There's the prettiest of the night-birds now. Name's Violet." John, although he had been looking straight across the room, happened to catch a side view of Claud's face. He believed that the man had begun to blush just as he had uttered the name, "Violet." Then he thought not. Claud blush? Later, he had excellent reason to remember the little circumstance.

At one side of the room ran a very long bar, over which hung the legend, "Bar-nothing Bar," and by the side of which stood a number of men, drinking and talking or ordering more drinks. Near by, on the same side of the hall, was a lofty and widish portal, leading to a pool-and-billiard room. At the opposite side of the hall were three great portals, wherethrough John observed in rhythmic motion a multitude of dancers. Fiddles and drums, fiddles and drums! How they kept the thing a-going! The stench of crowded human beings filled his nostrils, smell of fresh beer, too, and of stale beer, and very strong spirits. Foul words rose from time to time, incredibly foul, piercing through the veil of wild and indiscriminate clamor. All the faces were vicious in some degree, or reckless or inane.

"There's plenty of other night-birds here besides Violet," Claud went on. "And none of their hearts was ever meant for keeping. So you needn't be afraid. They may keep your purse though, if they get hands on it. Let's in. Onward, Christian soldier."

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John hesitated.

Said Claud, "If you'd rather, I'll take you and introduce you to that old pup with the whiskers at the seventh table on the right. He was a kind of preacher, settlement worker, or something. But, instead of converting 'this sinful place, my brethren,' he got converted himself, and now look! I'll introduce you."

"I believe," said John, "I had rather meet Violet."

"She's talking, just now, with Red George, Jacky my boy. And he's the worst cutthroat in all Granville. Besides, he speaks a dialect that'll give you the jim-jams. Made it up himself mostly. In his time he's played many parts, and now he doesn't linguistically remember which part he's playing. Wait until he goes to another table." But John was impatient, and so was taken at once to the table in question and introduced to Violet and Red George as "the Dook of Doolooth."

Now John, as we already know, had decided to become a terrible cynic, yet, as he caught the name of his uncle's city so lightly used to the ears of these villainous people, he felt himself ablush from head to foot.

Violet misunderstood the blush, and, leaning over, put out her rosy liplets for a kiss. John drew back, and raised his hands involuntarily. In fact he was scarcely able to keep from exclaiming "Pah!" He

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looked for Claud, too, but Claud had suddenly left.

Violet seemed not offended in the least, and John instinctively perceived that she belonged to the class that never takes offense except at too great niggardliness in the expenditure of money. He therefore tried to make amends. "Order what you want." Violet made it a bottle of champagne.

John promised himself that, though he would stay a cynic (that was absolutely necessary) yet, if he ever got out of this den of infamy alive, he would never, in all his life, return to it. But George—*Red* George—it was who was speaking.

"Has your Grace been long in Granville?"

"Came in today. Matriculated at the U. Wanted to see all sorts of life. Here."

Red George majestically waved a great, hairy hand—the thumb had gone from it. The gesture seemed to imply, "Help yourself."

The old cutthroat looked round about the hall, and John had leisure to study his build and physiognomy. He was a great, muscled mass of a man, with the chest and neck of a bull, a horseshoe jaw and a bullet head with straight red hair growing low over the brow. His eyes were small and black, and set too close together and much too near the brows.

And Violet! He studied her also. A little, trim thing of about eighteen, who was trying to look much older. Her hair was golden and very soft, and it

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formed a kind of halo about her head. Her eyes, overhung by heavy lids, were large and of a curious blue-green color. Her skin, unpainted and unpowdered, was white and fine—almost as white and fine as the finest of porcelain. But when she looked at John, she showed that her soul was coarse—as coarse as the very words she uttered.

Of a sudden, Red George stood up, and, pointing one of his great, hairy forefingers at some imaginary object, shouted: "I ain't right. I ain't right, and I need a drink."

A number of men came running with flasks. George grabbed the nearest, and, not waiting for any inconsequential like a glass, gurgled a stiff portion down his thick, rapidly moving gullet. "Ah-h-h!" His eyes closed for a moment. Opened again. He held the flask at arm's length, and, once more, John saw that the thumb of the large hairy right hand was missing. George drank the rest of the liquor and returned the flask to the friend that had brought it. "All right, Skulls," he said, quite plainly and cordially. "Much obliged."

He sat down and looked at John. "As I was sayin' to your Grace," he began. "Wa'n't I, Vi?"

"You certainly were, my dear."

Claud came up, looked at her for a moment with some concern, then at John, then vanished in the crowd again.

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"As I was sayin'," resumed George. He took a little package from his pocket. "Walk in a snow-storm, Brother?"

"Cocain?" asked John.

The man's eyes began to sparkle. "Happy dust. Have some? No? So much the more for me. What's your name, Brother?"

"John Smith."

"Like Satan it is. Everybody that comes in here is either John Smith or Henry Jones. Well, that's good enough—Mr. Smith. I want to tell you how I come to be in this condition. I'm a boxer and a wrestler both, and I ain't no wreck.—Got a silver dollar?"

John handed him one.

George snapped it in two with his fingers, put the pieces in his pocket.

Then he looked far off, as if he were gazing into the far distant past. He looked so extremely long, in fact, that John, for lack of other occupation, began to gaze again at Violet. And he looked at her as any sane man will look at an exquisite poisonous flower blooming in the fetid darkness of a jungle cave. She was just saying, "It's by long odds the most trying profession there is—that of being pretty and charming whenever called upon, regardless of the hour [she pointed to the ceiling] or how late you were up the night before, or how many drinks you took, or lovers you had, or cigarettes you smoked.

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As a vampire, I'm not so good. I'm—I'm getting old.—Why don't you pay attention?"

She signalled a waiter, whispered a word to him. He went off into the pool-room hurriedly.

Red George was next talking. "I tell you it's all the fault of the sentimentalists. I began at sixteen 'cause I wouldn't work. Parents rich and kind. Didn't exactly pamper me, either. But I got a criminal's brain. Anyway, I wouldn't work. They *ought* to 'a' made me.

"Finally, I wanted to kill three men for revenge. When law was passed, abolish capital punishment, I killed all. Manufactured extenuating circumstances. Got six years. Served six weeks."

"You don't mean to say the Governor pardoned you?"

"Governor Sprucebody. Pardoned *me*? Pardoned all my gang. *Course* he'd pardon us. These fellers [he swept his hand about the room] casts thousands votes, any 'lection. Control some 'lections. Pardon-board, it recommended—same reason as Governor pardoned—all in same gang. Hard work's not my strong point.

"To hell with work. I'd rather work a little in the penitentiary and have good treatment—plenty motion pictures, candy, music, lectures, flowers, games—than be outside and work. Still, I'd druther live outside and not work none at all. The senti-

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mentalists, they're to blame. I ought to 'a' been *made* work."

"How many times have you been in the penitentiary?"

"Eight. Last time, I tried to kill the warden. Then warden beat me with stick. Governor Sprucebody 'eard about it, and went and got the stick, and had a man use it with velocity on a horse in a Granville street.

"Then he had some feller arrest the man for cruelty to hanimals.

"Then 'e 'ad the 'ole thing put in the papers—'ow the community wouldn't allow a man to use on a horse a big stick it'd allow him to use on a man in prison. 'Twan't no argument, 'cause the horse wan't tryin' to kill nobody. But the sayin' took. And the Governor he called me a laborin' man (ye gods!) and said he wouldn't see no laborin' man beat up with no pole that the law wouldn't allow to be used on a horse.

"It caught on, 'z' I say. The Granville Criminology Society (with some of your smart professors in it) they voted him a gold medal. An' me— I got out. Hell's guns! I killed three men since. An' all the members of the Criminology Society was afeared I'd be hardened if I was kept in the prison any longer. God! The durned fools—I killed one of the women members' own husband after that, jest

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at the very moment, almost, when she was makin' a speech against hardenin' criminals. 'It's all our fault,' she says. (I seen her speech next day in the papers.) Ain't nobody responsible for nothin' he does, she says. It's always somebody else. Just how *nobody* can be responsible for terrible things, and yet *somebody* else be responsible fur 'em, I—Say, Dopey, gi' us a little whisky, won't ye?"

The young man he addressed paid no attention, but appeared to be gazing into vacancy. All at once Violet leaned over the table, and, pressing her rosebud mouth against John's, gave him a sudden kiss.

The smack was almost like the report of a pistol.

John was dreadfully embarrassed.

For some unguessable reason, a number of the loungers at some of the other tables arose and came up to that where John was seated. These seemed to arrange themselves about it in a kind of ring, a criminalistic boa constrictor, and with a great air of expectant attention.

All at once, the man called Dopey put his right hand in his pocket, and, standing back a pace or two, ordered John to stand up. John, puzzled, did not rise.

The order was repeated.

Red George cried out to the woman, "That skin game again! I done tole you I wouldn't stand for it no more.—Run, young man, run! Dook! What! you don't run? Then you *got* to fight, if you stay." He

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leaned over, and whispered: "They won't fight fair. Take something out o' my pocket, so I can't help myself, and use it."

John rose.

Once again Dopey cried out, "You insulted my goil, and now you got to fight me. Some o' these ladies in hyer *is* ladies, an' I'm goin' to perfect 'em. Fight, you ——!" He called John the foulest name that the mind of man has ever invented.

But John said, "I was never brought up to fight—not in earnest. I—"

"What! You *won't* fight! You insult a goil, an' then you won't fight?" He took off his coat, and John saw something being fitted, tight and shiny, over his big right hand—a pair of brass knuckles, as nearly as he could make out.

All at once, John turned toward one of the bystanders, those who, packed close together, formed a ring about him, and darted as if to attack that man.

Instead, however, he veered at right angles, lowered his head, and (an old, country trick) butted into the stomach of a different person. Bowled him over, rushed past his prostrate body, and dashed into a far corner of the room.

The whole hall was in instant uproar. Also, a number of the men who had formed the circle round John, were now headed by Dopey with his knuckle-duster, coming straight after him.

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John looked about like a wild deer. No means of escape. The portal by which he had entered the room stood on the farther side of his pursuers. No hope that way.

All at once he heard a shrill cry—Claud! He turned and saw his cousin, in the pool-room portal, beckoning frantically.

John deviated toward him, and the two flew down the pool-room—Claud in the lead—like a streak of greased light.

“Quick—in!” shrieked Claud, as he opened a tiny door at the pool-room’s end. John darted in, and the door closed behind him. Pitch dark all about! Then he heard a catch turn, and, a moment later, the sound of an electric light switch.

“Bright enough now.” Claud speaking.

The two ran on and on, first down one hall then up another. Claud first clicking on the lights, then clicking them off again. At length they arrived at a massive door of oak.

Claud took out a bundle of keys (he must be very familiar with the place, thought John) and, choosing the heaviest, fitted it into the lock, turned it and opened the door. Then he clicked off the light.

“Quick—in!”

John entered Stygian darkness. The heavy oak door closed behind him, and he heard Claud bolt it. Just at this moment the crowd of ruffians hurled

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themselves against the door. It quivered, but held fast.

"Take hold of the tails of my coat," ordered Claud. "Then you can't get lost."

John had had, from the very beginning of this affair, a slight suspicion of Claud's loyalty. Of course the whole thing might be nothing but a cruel hoax. Then again, it might be infinitely worse than that. Claud had expected to inherit his uncle's fortune, and John had received it instead. Plenty of motive, therefore, for serious disloyalty in such a man as Claud. John began to perceive the utter folly of coming to such a midnight hell in any circumstances. But, in company with Claud—his successful rival for Jean and his unsuccessful rival for his uncle's fortune—to come hither to such a gang of desperados in company with the one single man who, of all the world perhaps, could be his bitter, his relentless, enemy— The folly of his entire conduct came upon him like a weight of iron.

How easy it would have been to play the bitter cynic and still keep out of such holes and death traps!

Nevertheless here he was, and he saw no better thing to do now than to scurry along in the dark—whither he knew not—tightly holding to the coat tails of his cousin.

All at once a sound like distant thunder! A faint light in the passage.

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"They've broken through the oak doors!" exclaimed Claud. And John thought that he really discovered in his cousin's voice a note of genuine anguish.

A moment later Claud snapped on a light, and opened a tiny, slit-like passage leading to a stairway. The stair led down into cool and stenchy darkness. A basement, no doubt.

"Go in there," ordered Claud. "Go down the stair, and keep on going—just as far as you can. When you reach a stone wall, with a sewer's mouth in it—stop. Don't turn either way, just stop. I'll meet you a little later—if possible. Meanwhile, I'll try to lead the chase in another direction."

John rushed in, and crept softly down the old stair.

He heard Claud dash away, outside the now closed stair-door, and, apparently, at right angles to the passage by which the two had come. Then John heard people falling heavily and promiscuously in that same long passage. He recalled a low pile of various articles that Claud had hurriedly built up just round a corner in the passage—a drygoods box, filled a little with broken chairs and various non-descript articles. Dashing round the corner of the passage, the pursuers had, undoubtedly, fallen over the barricade pell mell.

John, in his downward course, found light-switch

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after light-switch, each by the light of the lamp snapped on before. At length he arrived at the end of the last stair-case.

There was one more switch. He snapped the light on.

He then found himself in the midst of a vast cavern of a basement, or basement under a basement, he could not say which. The light of the last cobwebbed incandescent lamp ran feebly out into the gloom in every direction, and was simply lost. Nowhere any wall.

Or so, at first, John believed. Then, gradually, as his eyes became accustomed to the twilight, he saw! There, just as Claud had described it—a stone wall, with a vast man-hole (running to a sewer no doubt) perforating the masonry.

John slowly sauntered over to the wall, and stood by the side of the man-hole—not too near.

How long should he have to wait? He had no idea. Perhaps an hour. Perhaps a day, two days. Perhaps more than very many days. Should he ever dare, if time went on too long without Claud, and starvation and thirst together threatened him, to mount those menacing stairs again? What would happen if he mounted them as soon as day had returned? Would day make any difference in a haunt of criminals like these—criminals protected both by the law (the law which was meant for the

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protection of general society, not criminals) and also by the silly sentimentality of unbalanced fools and "intellectuals"? He thought not.

He believed that he heard a sound in the man-hole. A rat, probably.

A rat it was! It ran out into the room, a great fat gray beast, skinning its little short teeth and blinking its hungry-looking eyes. It glanced up at him, and uttered a series of shrill squeals—at first, John thought, of fear, but, later, of entire satisfaction.

It ran back into the sewer.

Soon John heard a loud sound of scurrying. Then with a scamper and a mighty rush that threw the dust of the cellar in clouds all about, a whole band of giant rats had come forth from the sewer and rushed off into the darkness.

Then John caught another sound—a steady, if muffled, tramp—tramp—tramp.

At first he believed these were footsteps on some of the uppermost of the stairs by which he had descended.

Later he knew that the sounds were coming from the sewer. At last, thought he, Claud was coming.

Light issued from the sewer—a faint, almost undiscernible, gleam. But it strengthened, strengthened. And Claud was close behind, bringing succor. There could be no doubt about that.

CHAPTER XI
THE SNOWBIRD FIGHTS

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JOHN stepped straight before the sewer's mouth; then, shading his eyes with his hand, peered into the great tube.

All he saw was the bright, almost dazzling, eye of a search-light. "Claud!" he cried. "Claud!"

Strangely enough, there came no answer.

Once again he shouted, "Claud!"

Again no answer.

Then he stepped away from the mouth of the sewer, and looked about for some kind of weapon. Heaven keep us from disaster! *any* sort of weapon, even the smallest!

The steps became much slower. Evidently his assailant, if assailant he were (and John began to hope that the comer might turn out to be Red George, or, preferably, some proper sort of policeman) was not intending to step too suddenly out of the sewer, and so be taken advantage of.

John thought of his knife, felt in his pocket for it. No knife. In another pocket, all the pockets. No knife. Then he remembered that, on changing his clothes, just before starting out this evening with Claud, he had left his knife in the other suit.

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Some one stepped out of the sewer, turned off his search-light.

Dopey!

John, when he saw the expression of the man's eyes, did not pause to argue with their owner. Neither did he utter one single word. Nor did Dopey.

John simply threw his coat off, tucked up his sleeves, prepared for battle.

The man who did not believe in fighting, who had been "brought up never to fight—that is, in earnest," now made ready for a terrible fray.

Dopey, meanwhile, had laid his flash-light down, and, adjusting his knuckle-duster a little more properly over his big right hand, let down his head a little, after the fashion of fighters in the prize ring, and, looking with glowing little eyes up through his bushy eyebrows, began to advance toward John.

Now John, although not trained in professional fighting, was very well versed in all the tricks and wiles of country combat. He was also a tall and very strong young man, with plenty of reach and activity. He also knew these points about himself, and, almost instinctively, guessed the thing that was right for him to do.

Dopey had fainted and then given a vicious side-swipe with his right—a swipe which, had it "landed," might have killed its victim instantly. But John ducked under the blow, and, stepping quickly in,

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gave his assailant a right hand to the jugular.

But Dopey only staggered, went back, came on again. "A swine for punishment," thought John. "I shall have to try some other way."

He fought more cautiously, ducking, side-stepping, and, altogether, leading his would-be executioner a rapid chase over the old basement floor. His antagonist's eyes were blazing with the incredible light of insanity. Dopey at length made a very unwise lead for John's body. A moment afterward, John had taken his arm between his own arm and body and imprisoned it there. Then, by a little trick well known to rough-and-tumble fighters, had removed the knucks and thrown them away.

He released the arm, crying: "Now we shall fight. And it shall be a fair fight, you rascal."

But he beheld (and none too soon) that Dopey had drawn a stiletto—a small, slender, dull, almost blackish blade—about the length and color, John thought, of a good-sized hatpin.

Then John heard shouts in the sewer.

He turned to look.

Dopey, seeing his advantage, leaped upon him. But John caught his wrist, and the two began to struggle. John shouted, shouted again. The sounds of stamping that issued from the sewer's mouth came closer and closer. The steps of many—John thought, almost a multitude. Claud, no doubt,

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coming with police, at least with some sort of ample assistance.

John endeavored, nevertheless, to break his assailant's wrist. In vain. He clutched the bones hard with both hands, and strove with all his might again and again. But Dopey was a powerful man, and his bones held fast. Meanwhile, Dopey was beating John about the face and neck, so that John's mind was becoming cloudy.

A moment later John saw, off somewhere—he could not really be certain that he saw it at all—Claud's face. Thank God if—if—it were not an hallucination! If—

A mighty roar filled his ears. Steps on the stairway, he imagined.

He thought Hoop-skirts was bending over him, trying to bring him to.

Then he knew no more.

A moment afterward, or so it seemed, Hoop-skirts *was* over him. Also Stilts and Billy and Landstrum and Claud. "The gang's all here," John muttered.

"Yes, thank God!" ejaculated Hoop-skirts. "And *you're* here too. We thought you had gone to heaven, my boy, even after we'd got you out of that hell-on-earth and into this alley."

"Are we—far—from Sob Stuff Inn?"

"Sh-h-h!" whispered Stilts. "There's a policeman pacing his beat, out yonder on the street-sidewalk.

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Don't let him hear you. The police are pretty easy on us students, but, as between students and crooks, they'd side every time— Say, Hoops, get a taxi, quiet as poss."

The morning star was rising as John and Claud got back to the grilled gate of "The Luxembourg House." They had left the other students at their dormitories and come on, John from time to time relapsing into a doze, anon putting his fingers up to feel of various knobs and knots about his face and skull. His heart, from time to time, filled with hate for his cousin. Clearer and clearer assurance came to him that all this night's adventure had been a trick, a vicious stratagem, of Claud's.

When they had got inside the house, John let go and told Claud what he thought of this most uncousinly treachery.

Claud, instead of lifting shrill voice in angry protest, merely raised his left arm. There, in his coat, was a sop of blood.

"Why!" cried John. "You're wounded, Claud! Why didn't you— Help here! Help!"

The butler, at a call through the speaking tube, came running from the attic in great haste and pajamas. He phoned for a surgeon, helped John to undress Claud and get him to bed. At this end of the proceeding, Claud fainted.

John almost cursed his great stupidity in not

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seeing before that, whatever his cousin's faults, no treachery this night had been among them. In any case, had not he himself been wholly responsible for the evening's escapade? Had he not asked Claud to take him out to see the dark side of America? He it was who had wanted to be cynical and wretched. Yes, and he had been a cynical fool, fool almost enough to believe that Claud—

The doctor came, dressed the puncture—a fearful stiletto wound, which, as Hoop-skirts afterwards explained, had been intended for John. Then the doctor went away, assuring the cynic, however, that his cousin would, in time, recover. “But a bad wound, a bad wound.”

CHAPTER XII
THOU SHALT NO FARTHER GO

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THOU SHALT NO FARTHER GO

CLAUD did, in time, recover. Not, however, for two weeks, during all which time he lay in the Luxembourg House. And John was very good to him, believing him to have been his savior in that underground fight—which, in a way, he had. And John paid some of Claud's debts.

On the morning when Claud, now fully recovered, was to be returned to his dormitory room, John asked: "Cousin dear, anything else I can do for you?"

"No, nothing else. Yes, by Bacchus, I lie. There is something else. Let's give a banquet, Jack—here in your ducal palace—a banquet such as will open the eyes of all the ages—past, present and to come. Hoop-skirts 'll be for it, help us with it. So'll Stilts, Billy, and Landstrum. So'll fifty or sixty others, a hundred. And, say, you've got the room to do it in. Have half the upperclassmen here, plenty of outside entertainers also."

"No liquor, Claud. Also no—"

Claud looked down, then up. "We don't really need liquor, my darling. But all the rest of the—of the—all we need. Give me *carte blanche*. I'll see

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to it. We don't want any high-brows, any long-haired, greasy grinds. And we don't want any freshmen. But, *mon cher cousin*, the rest shall come.

'Meanwhile the wingéd heralds by command
Of ducal power, with awful ceremony
And trumpet's sound throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium [excuse me, I mean The Luxembourg House] the high capital
Of Satan and his peers.' "

John shuddered. He would rather have had the high-brow angels, those who had not yet been tossed over the crystal battlements. However, John could not, at least very well, under just these present circumstances, refuse Claud—Claud who had possibly saved his life.

He said, "All right," which, as he knew, was all wrong. And Claud took charge of the preparations.

Meanwhile John wrote up to Duluth, to have his uncle's library shipped. Mr. Proteus himself kindly saw to the shipping, and John, at the Granville end, was deliriously happy as he supervised the installation of the rare old books.

Ah, what treasures! what treasures!

And Jean, little Jean, having learned, as needs must be, when time passed, there in Mr. Proteus' office, that John was a very rich man, felt her heart grow heavy and cold. No such wealthy man could

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ever want *her* to wife. Came also, once, a tale about John—a sad, sad tale of an escapade in the haunts of unspeakable criminals. She cried herself to sleep, that night.

Next day she took dictation from Mr. Proteus—a letter to John. John, according to this letter, was to have his uncle's library shipped to him forthwith. Packed and packed most carefully, under the eye of Mr. Proteus, then sent by Merchants Dispatch. But the costlier, the rarer, the irreplaceable volumes were to go by express insured. She trusted that John was going to be a scholar now, after this shipment. Perhaps he was struggling between conflicting ideals. She had often heard that many young men did have to undergo such tortures. She wondered if she ought not really to write to John, write to him this very night. Or—she flushed as the idea came to her. Why not drop just a tiny note into Mr. Proteus' letter—a foolish, would-be witty, thing, say by way of joke. And yet, too, turned in such manner that it might help John.

Then, as if the shrewd old lawyer had read the heart in her breast, there came speech from Mr. Proteus: "Jean, my girl! Jean—I wish—I wish you'd write this fine young man a letter. His mother has lately died—so I've learned from friends in Iowa—and he therefore has nobody now to guide him. He needs clean help."

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Jean bowed low over her typewriter, and, as she tap-tapped out the concluding words of Mr. Proteus' missive to John, almost touched her forehead to the very roller of the machine.

Mr. Proteus, as he passed her on his way back to his private room, softly touched the glorious darkness of her hair, and murmured: "Don't give him up too soon. He's a fine young man."

So Jean determined to write. But, encouraged as she had been by Mr. Proteus, she decided to write a good, motherly letter—such a letter as any girl of twenty understands the penning of to a well set-up young man just a year or two her senior.

Back in Granville, Claud and Stilts and Billy and all the rest of that edifying gang, were getting up John's banquet. On the full success thereof (as Claud assured John) would depend John's acceptance into, or his rejection from, the Alpha Beta Beta fraternity. John strongly doubted the desirability of membership in Claud's newly formed organization. Yet he must, somehow, get generally acquainted. He was trying to study his lessons, to keep up with his classes, even to form desirable friendships among "high-brow" students. Yet, for some reason, there were always many distractions. He had formed no bad alliances among women, never drunk a glass of liquor, or profaned his lips with improper language. But yet—the distractions! He could learn easily, but

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he had no time— O well, the banquet over, he would change his way of life, leave all this silly wasting of golden hours. Little he knew how thoroughly his prophecy was to be fulfilled, or in what way.

The night of the banquet came. John himself, brought up as he had been, fairly trembled at the extent and magnificence of his cousin's—or, rather, his own—preparations.

Much extra help had been employed: caterers, waiters, actors, negro minstrels, every sort and kind of contributor to entertainment. But never a sign of strong drink. Not even a look or a smell thereof.

The guests began to arrive. Also came, by messenger, a small yellow envelope. This he placed in the inner pocket of his tuxedo coat, without examination. John, in the last few weeks had grown accustomed both to the sending and the receiving of telegrams. They no longer meant, as when he had lived in Iowa, the occurrence of some great calamity—loss of fortune, great railway accident, or, most frequently of all, natural death among kinfolk. These messages were now to him simply one form of ordinary communication. Mr. Proteus, perhaps, had received a favorable offer for some of John's rather numerous Duluth stores. And goodness knew John was going to need more ready money soon—after all this! Still, he didn't really mind expense, if only the banquet would exalt him with "the boys,"

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make him eligible for membership in the Alpha Beta Beta—or something.

“The Bombshell Brood”—*to wit*: Claud, Stilts, Billy, Landstrum, and Hoop-skirts—helped John to receive the guests.

John was astonished at the extreme stiffness and formality of the occasion. He had expected no such thing—rather a jovial handshaking, accompanied by hearty laughter, jokes, bits of irrepressible class songs. But you would have thought, to see these slow, straight and extremely meticulous young men enter the house, that the very Prince of Decorum himself was going to hold high levee in The Luxembourg Mansion. Even some of the fellows whom John had pushed about and joked with on the campus stalked in tonight like undertakers preparing to do their saddest deeds. Stilts was “Mr. Magnus;” Hoop-skirts, “Mr. Browning-White.”

But at last the ordeal was over. The guests were all in and duly installed at table. John, at the head of the longest table, as well as the nearest to the kitchen, looked over the assembly with a shudder of fear. This might have been the Roman Senate gathered before him. At his right sat Hoop-skirts—no doubt about that. At his left, Stilts. Next to these were Landstrum (right) and Billy (left). At the opposite end of the table, facing John, was Claud. At some of the other tables John saw other old friends—

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Metalliferous and Hand-shake, Barbed-wire and Windy, Liquid Dynamite, Hogweed and Jargon. Yes, even old Spoon—Spoon with the slick, black hair; Spoon the sentimentalist and jokesmith. And never a smile on any single face.

John was in a panic, and all the scene began to become a blur to him—a mere messy forecast of absolute failure.

Presently Hoop-skirts broke the silence. He said in an acidly thin, clear tone: "I enjoy this meeting very much, gentlemen. It is not like Trimalchio's feast, which Petronius described. The only fun that has any real fun in it is the clean fun that leaves no bad taste in the mouth, that brings no sudden headache the morning after, the kind of fun that one can lay up as a happy memory, instead of bowing with shame to recall."

John gave a shudder of disgust. He had not wanted revels, but this—this frigid sermonizing at what had been meant to be a jolly feast—and which had cost him so much!

Claud came to the rescue with a mad attempt to break the ice. "Gentlemen!" he cried. "This is a great, an unprecedented display of hospitality. What's the matter with the Duke of Duluth?"

Nobody said that anything at all was the matter with the Duke of Duluth. Neither, on the other hand, did any one venture to suggest that he was

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"all right." The hall was entirely silent, except for the very gentle and wholly proper sound of soup, as soup goes into the mouths of those who know exactly what to do with it.

Hogweed piped up from the farthest corner of the farthest table, "What's Duluth?"

This was Claud's chance, and John, in his mind, thanked him cordially for taking it. Now for the fun! "Duluth," said Claud, broadcasting a look over all the tables like that of a person who knows he is about to make a great hit, "Duluth is the Zenith City of the Unsalted Seas." Then he went on with the joke which Hoop-skirts had used when Claud and John had met "the boys" just before entering the Sob Stuff Inn. "It's a place where they have dog derbies, the aurora borealis, and snowsnakes."

"What's dog derbies?" asked one solemn voice.

"And snowsnakes?" another.

"What's the aurora borealis?"

The last was a little too much for John's endurance. "The aurora borealis," he himself explained, in the solemn tone of a college professor squeezing out profundity, "is the glare of the huge electric signs of Duluth against the sky of the northern hemisphere."

"Snowsnakes," added Claud, "are creatures that breed in the snow. They are perfectly white, with

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pink eyes, and, when traveling in vast armies, they eat up the crops."

"Crops!" cried some one. "Good heavens! In winter?"

"Crops of walruses and seals. When attacking walruses and seals, the snowsnakes often close their eyes, and then cannot be distinguished from the surrounding snow.—But, speaking of snakes generally, I'll have to tell you gentlemen about a recent exploit of our honored host—er—*among* some of the serpents of Granville."

John slightly rose and bowed in two directions.

"Mr. Smith was desirous, as soon as he arrived here in Granville, of learning whether the conditions in the underworld of Granville were quite so bad as are those in Duluth. He is, I may add somewhat parenthetically, contemplating the early production of a Ph.D. thesis on the subject, 'Conditions of Serious Crime in Duluth and Granville: A Comparative Study.' " [Faint handclaps.] John bowed again and again, thanked Claud from the bottom of his heart. Claud *would* break the ice eventually—but why bring in Duluth?

"So Hoop-skirts here, together with the Duke, Stilts, and Billy, also Landstrum and myself, went down to the Sob Stuff Inn—which, as you know, is a place of the tough toughly. There he had plenty of adventure. Did he not, Cousin?"

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John waved his right hand slightly, as if to dispose of a matter which, however important it might appear in other peoples' eyes, amounted to nothing in his own.

Claud continued. "We entered the Inn. We heard, we saw, and, eventually, were set upon—but not conquered. A ring of attackers was formed about my cousin. Of these he knocked down six, then came flying in my direction—looking, very naturally, for succor. I'm not strong on succor, but I'm handy at escape from tight positions—being inclined, almost always, to think of the easiest way. I therefore led my cousin along many corridors, finally introduced him to a basement, closed a secret door above him, and sped off—thinking to mislead our gang of fiendish pursuers.

"I did mislead them. Following me, they lost the scent—the trail, rather—of our friend and host, Mr. John Smith. But I, also and too, by mere good fortune, escaped.

"Gathering together, at this point, the so-called Bombshell Brood (who, I may say, had been somewhat freely imbibing, instead of studiously inspecting the conditions under which these dreadful criminals live) I took them down by a secret way into what was once a very large sewer, but which, in more recent times, has served as a private passage to a horrible place—a—in fact a death trap.

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"There our present host stood, surrounded by eighteen terrible criminals, and—"

"I had killed sixteen, just before you arrived," reminded John, without turning a hair.

"Nineteen," corrected Claud. "Nineteen." Then he stopped.

The hall was absolutely silent. John's heart sank. He began to wish himself dead. *Would* nothing, *could* nothing ever awaken these students?

He tried once more to talk to his guests. But all he could think to say was, "Criminals seem to be coddled by society."

"And that's wrong," ventured Landstrum, but did not develop the theme.

Claud seemed to feel that the mood of the party required something more philosophic than he had hitherto attempted. "All the world's a den, gentlemen," he laid down, professorially. "And all the men and women merely criminals. From the farm-hand to the Governor, each individual person attempts to 'get it in the easiest way.'"

"And what's the reason? The bunk of the sentimentalists. My cousin's right.

"Take it here in Granville. The Parlor Theorists Association has on one of its banners—MAKE PRISON LIFE ATTRACTIVE. On another—THE OBJECT OF PUNISHMENT IS THE PLEASURE OF THE CRIMINAL, NOT THE

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PROTECTION OF SOCIETY. On still another—
DISCOURAGE CRIMINALS BY FEEDING
YOUR LOVED ONES TO THEM. Mrs. Slush-
waller, the other night, made a speech in which she
declared that it would be far better for a hundred
young ladies to be raped, a hundred homes to be
burned down, and even a hundred helpless people
to be murdered in their beds, than that the feelings
of a single rapist or throat-cutter should be hurt
by putting him in a penitentiary and compelling
him to work.”

“Work!” cried Stilts. “Work’s what I ain’t never
done nothing else but. And they ain’t never wasted
no sob stuff on *me*.”

“That’s because you ain’t bad *enough*. You’re a
dickens of a fellow, but you still have some good
points.”

That’d get ’em, thought John. But it didn’t.

The last sherbet had arrived and been eaten, the
last frozen pudding, the last cake. Even the cups of
strong black coffee had been drunk, and still other
cups of it had appeared upon the scene. Yet all was
dullness in the ducal castle.

Somebody in a distant spot whispered, “What
time is it?” John heard this plainly, and thought he
should die.

Someone started to sing, flaccidly: “Just forget
that I forgot you.”

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One of the men—a tall, lank, clerical-looking fellow—arose and calmly observed: “It is fitting, gentlemen, on such joyous occasions, that, in the midst of our hilarity, we should pause to remember the dead—those former boon companions who are not able—to meet with us now. And—chief among the list of the dead—” He broke absolutely down.

“Is John Barleycorn,” completed Claud, with a wild, lingering moan.

“Is John Barleycorn,” agreed the clerical-looking one, sobbing. He took out a handkerchief, and, drooping at the corners of his mouth, began, in silence, to wipe imaginary tears away.

Each and every other guest in the apartment then took out his own handkerchief, and began to imitate the wiping.

Of a sudden, Claud leaped to the top of his table, and shouted in a ringing voice: “No! By the nine sweet gods of boon companionship, he is NOT dead.”

“What? Not dead?” (A hundred intense askers.)

The handkerchiefs were quickly put away. Men began to look about in various attitudes and with various expressions of incredulity, not unmixed with wonder and pleasure. Once again they questioned with enraptured voices:

“What? Not dead?”

“He *was* dead,” shouted Claud. “But now he

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liveth again. He hath a million lives, this Jack of all ages and nations. Kill him, and a few paltry dollars will once again galvanize him into LIFE."

At the word, "life," a great curtain rolled away from a portal at the end of the wide middle aisle between the tables. A bright red light filled the room. A hidden band struck up rollickingly, and the queerest procession which John had ever seen came into the room.

In the van were two students dressed as wild Indians. Each bore aloft two sheaves of barley, and each was shouting as if for dear life: "He lives! He lives!"

Next came John Barleycorn himself, surrounded by persons dressed in the costumes of all nations. He seemed to be a very aged person, John, quite as aged as jolly, and he was rolled, or rather carried, in a huge invalid chair. Regardless of expense, he had been cast, or somehow shapen, out of metal, then provided with a pale yellow hide and a blooming red nose. From each of the tips of his fingers and toes ran out a glass straw. Also from his nose and mouth and ears, from the back of his head, from his stomach, thighs and knees.

The students dashed over one another, trying to get at the sucking-tubes. For a moment, then, there was silence.

Then yells, halloos, shrieks and beatings with

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fists. "Avast there! Avaunt! Do you wish to drink him dry while the rest of us perish with thirst?" And so on.

John, in his horrified heart, kept saying, only: "Traitor! Traitor! Claud's a traitor! And all that overdone solemnity was merely a ruse to make me willing to accept the carousal. Either it was that, or else it was a mere joke to make the drinking funnier by contrast. O Claud, Claud! And the story will go back to Duluth!" He decided, however, that it was best to let matters slide; to put on the kindest face that he could. He must be a gentleman.

But John absolutely refused to drink. He had promised his mother once, and a promise, by all the gates of heaven, is a promise, and must be kept.

Long, villainous-looking bottles were brought into the room.

Again and again a drink was offered him. But John did not drink. He merely wondered and wondered. People back home were making sacrifices for these young men, for many of them.

When all had got their "whistles" wet, and more than wet, each pranced back to his original place at the table. Waiters passed the bottles once more. Then once more again.

John swallowed his growing anger. In a very gentle tone he said, "I believe I've been betrayed, but

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no matter. Be happy, gentlemen, so long as you're under my roof."

"To Hades with the roof!" cried Hoop-skirts. All the guests shouted till it seemed as if the roof would indeed and in truth fly off—somewhere.

In the semi-pause that followed, "Define university," ordered Claud with a fine professorial air.

"A university is an excuse for idleness," answered Stilts.

"And dissipation," added Landstrum.

"To sulphur with universities."

"Especially this university."

"Especially all—hic—universities." Billy speaking. "I—hell—university—hell—I—" He was prone on the floor, fast asleep, apparently.

Hogweed protested. "I will not—hic—hear—university—disparage—so. Hic." He too was on the floor, though supine, and fast asleep, beyond doubt.

Hoop-skirts: "Let us rise and sing—

'Born in a mud puddle,
In the form of a tadpole,
Life means but little
To the future hop toad.'"

Blackenberry: "Zhat's 'cause he's brought up in water. But zhis is dehydrated banquet. It means much. Dook, your Grace is an ass. Brought up like tadpole, in puddle of water, your Grace is ass."

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"No he ain'," piped Spoons. "No he ain'. His Grace is mule's fazzer. I—hic— Dead cats to Prohibition. Dehydrated banquet! Whereza bottle? Drink till stars grow dim, Dook. Your cousin says your muzzer's from fine ol' English family. Doan *zay* drink? Drink—"

Claud ran his hand through his hair, which, as a rule, resembled a patent leather dome, and made it bristle like a gigantic chimney-cleaner. He then attempted to speak, but seemed unable to think clearly. Finally he cried, "Define *vis a tergo*."

"Zhis is *vis a tergo*," answered Spoons above the general uproar. "It means, Drink as much as you want to."

But Claud took two matches, one between the thumb and forefinger of each hand, held them out sideways at arm's length, and then, very slowly, brought their heads together accurately in front of him. "If you had nerves like that, gentlemen," he said to all the tables, "you could 'drink till the shtars grow dim' sure enough, and then cut a man's throat from ear to ear the next morning, and never so much as blink."

"But zhat ain't *vis a tergo*."

"To hell with *vis a tergo*," screamed Stilts. "Want to know whatsh *vis a tergo*? Come here—come, Spoons. Come here."

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Spoons came, with considerable gravity and difficulty.

"Stand there, with your back behind you—I mean towards me," delivered Stilts. "Now! Ready?"

Spoons having answered, "Prepared," Stilts kicked him a terrible kick and sent him sprawling over the floor.

Spoons twisted up his broad face stupidly as he lay on the rug. "Is ZHAT *vis a tergo*?"

"Yes."

"Funny I didn't *shee* it."

Stilts reached a bottle down to his mouth. He drank deeply, seeking forgetfulness.

Got it too, just as Hosanna (the clerical-looking student) cried to John: "You're English, they say, Mr. Smith, in part at least, and you'll maybe get red under the collar. But the English have always been dirty dogs to me. That's all they are, anyway—dirty dogs. They turned my grandmother out of her home in Ireland. *Your* people, you blasted English descendant—you—you—and you're part Norwegian. Not another drop, gentlemen." But he drank, all the same, the glass that two of his neighbors urged upon him for the purpose of changing the current of his thoughts, and at once he began to sing, paraphrasing a ditty of the day:

"O most noble Dook,
O most mighty and majestic Dook,

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Come fliv with me and be my little,
I said little, O you little,
Fliv with me and be my little
Sweet patootsie Dook!"

John rose and bowed. He was delighted to think that, up to this point at all events, the dove of peace had not had its neck wrung.

All at once Claud cried, "A freshman is a being of a very low order of intelligence." But just then some one at a farther table shouted, "Skinner! Skinner! Violet Skinner!"

"So kill all the freshmen that you like."

"But we don't like *any* of them."

"Then all you *don't* like."

"Skinner! Skinner!"

"She's a skinner all right," murmured Hoop-skirts to John in the confusion. "Violet Skinner, Queen of the Underworld. You saw her: she put that job up on you at the S. S. Inn, because you didn't fall in love fast enough. Youth is generally fast enough, but, to women of her sort, a love affair must begin and end on a single night."

The lights went down to a mere twilight gleam.

A curtain at the opposite end of the room from that by which John Barleycorn had entered, was moved slowly to one side.

There were first negro minstrels. Then—

Soft, sweet music began—so sweet, so far, so

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melancholy and so strangely wild, that even the drunken crew of Granville University were silent. A pause came into the music. John could hear, in the background of the night, the *spit-spit-spit-spit* of snow against a distant window-pane. He recalled that, so, he had often sat, listening, in the little upstairs "study" of his Iowa home, longing for the time to come when he should be a hard-working scholar at some famous university.

Violet began "performing." She wound up in a fury of applause, and some of the wilder and richer students threw her ten-dollar gold pieces. Followed acrobatics, motion pictures, and, finally, wrestling and boxing matches.

Red George came out from a side door of the stage, and challenged "anybody in the crowd" to a fair fight with small hard gloves. George was a terrible boxer, and the fact was thoroughly known. Cries of "Host! Host! He licked nineteen in Red George's cellar!"

John was excited, and knew not what to do. All the anger in his heart began boiling up into one great confusion. Of a sudden Hoopskirts handed him a cup. "Here! Drink this coffee, and go to it." (So do the gods of fate disport themselves in an ironic mood.)

John drank, not even noticing the unusual flavor of the coffee.

A moment later he knew by the wave of steadiness

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and courage which came over him, that he had had a shot of whisky.

The dove of peace took sick and fainted on the spot.

So did Red George—in the middle of the first round. John was sorry he had struck him so hard. The old-time pugilist had plainly, of late, been living solely on his reputation. His muscles were strong enough, but his judgment of distance and his eyes were all wrong.

The banqueteers went wild. They lifted John upon their shoulders, screamed like devils, paraded the room. All at once, somebody yelled: "The duds! The women's duds!"

Some one brought into the room big boxes of women's union underwear. John was beginning to feel his whisky more and more. A dim mist wove about him. He never, in fact, distinctly remembered what occurred in the next wild hour or so. He heard loud voices as mere sound. He always remembered the eyes of Claud, gazing straight and dangerously into his own, as hard and bright as polished black metal. But whether the gang did actually go out into the public streets dressed in women's union underwear, he never, of his own clear recollection, knew. Hoop-skirts afterwards assured him that they did, and that, in an hour or more, they returned, John leading the way and babbling incoherently.

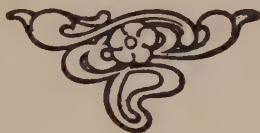
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John did indeed seem to remember, in his after years, that, on returning, he drank more "coffee" from the hands either of Stilts or Hosanna, and that then he was challenged to a small-glove-battle by Claud. Claud was a terrific boxer, as many of those present well knew. He, to a certainty, was not living on his reputation. But John accepted the challenge. He could always remember that much.

He could always remember, too, that, whenever he attempted to strike Claud, there seemed to be two Clauds, and that he never could tell for the life of him which Claud he ought to strike.

Then, strangely, a soft peace settled upon him. It was like "Nirvana," he thought, as it came.

BOOK III
A LIFE TWICE CHANGED



CHAPTER XIII
THE SUPPLANTED

CHAPTER XIII

THE SUPPLANTED

A SOUNDLESS voice was speaking to John from within that mass which had pressed upon his forehead. It seemed to come again after a century of suspended time. And the voice then seemed to say to him: "Years ago you chose the pathway of your life, and it is written that you must walk that path forever. You can *fight* for a place at the side of a decent, pure woman. You can *struggle* to secure a foothold on the lofty heights of the world. Nevertheless you must now walk your own lonely, lowly way forever." Then he became again unconscious.

Hours later, as it seemed, he awoke once more, striving to drive back the blur of pain and vague recollections of former existence. At length, with a vast effort he opened his eyes. But the light hurt them, and he closed them. And then a thousand thunders seemed to smite his ears. A great rock appeared to be rolling down an echoing declivity. It alighted on his breast, and stayed there. In a moment the light faded, and a blood-mist swam before his vision. He seemed to be falling, falling away into nothingness. A curious humming like

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the far off ringing of a bell rang through his brain. Then—darkness and oblivion.

Once again—light. Light and a great vague shame—the shame of all the world upon his shoulders. He tried hard to make out the exact nature of the shame, but was unable to do so. Yet he somehow knew that he would try to live it down, that terrible shame.

Darkness again, and almost immediately afterward a riot of ideas convulsing his heart. In the midst of the riot—a great shame again. Black years that might have been brilliant! Laurels that had turned to dust! A wonderful woman, looking upon him with pitying eyes: his mother—no, Jean!

He slowly and stiffly arose from the couch on which he had been lying, and looked about a room. *What* room? There was ruin here—ruin and chaos and— Tables upset! All over the floor, broken dishes! Smashed chandeliers, smashed paintings, smashed bookcases, smashed windows! What did these upset tables, all this ruin, mean?

Ah yes, the banquet!

He was suffering intensely and was fearfully bruised from head to foot. Feeling of all his bones, however, he found that none was fractured. The point of his chin and the back of his head! Ah yes, Claud! Then he recalled Claud's treachery about the banquet.

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And plain word of all these matters would, undoubtedly, go back to Duluth!

If only his own conscience had been entirely clear, he would not have minded quite so much. But he himself was, in part at least, to blame. Partly? What an entire fool to associate at all with a man like Claud Tyrone!

He looked about the room again. All, all alone. He started to shout for the butler, but a veritable little crater of pain spurted up in the left joint of his lower jaw. And his throat—it was— He fell back on the sofa again from sheer weakness of mind and body. And because he dreamed the whole miserable episode of the banquet over, he awoke with the feeling at first that it was all only a dream. But again the oppressive realization came over him.

As he opened his eyes, they watered. He reached into the breast pocket of his coat, fumbling for a handkerchief. His fingers came upon a little envelope instead, and he drew that out.

For a time he merely toyed with it. Then, remembering vaguely that it contained a telegram, he slowly arose, moved to the nearest window, and shot up a curtain. Raining! The wind was driving through the trees at a fearful rate, and an elm, just outside the window, threw its giant arms about in wild supplication to a wilder sky.

He opened the envelope, drew forth the telegram,

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and, at first, not wholly comprehending, read in a daze.

Then he read again, and stood more like a man dead than one living. The bit of yellow paper fell from his nerveless fingers to the floor. Its message had been: JOHN SMITH, 61 ELM ROAD, GRANVILLE. HAVE TELEGRAPHED YOU TWICE ABOUT YOUR MOTHER'S DEATH AND RECEIVED NO ANSWER. WILL YOU ATTEND FUNERAL? RICHARD WILTMORE, MINISTER.

John somehow got to the telephone. There he sought information of the telegraph company. Why had this particular message been delayed for nearly two weeks, and two earlier messages not been delivered even yet? His interlocutor informed him that he would look the information up and yield it immediately. Would not John wait? John would wait.

As he waited, he saw, reflected in the unbroken glass of a bookcase door just in front of him, a smashed bookcase door on the opposite wall, therefore behind his back. As he kept looking, he noticed that a piece of white paper appeared to be sticking out of the top of one of the books. He felt a little curious about this, not having noticed such a piece of paper in any of his books before. As soon as he had finished talking, he would investigate.

A voice over the phone. The facts about the

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messages were as follows: The first two despatches had been delivered to a Mr. John Smith, 61 Elm Row, not Road. These had never been returned to the company, probably because Mr. and Mrs. Smith had been out of Granville at the time, and only their children and a foreign nurse had been at home. The last message had been delivered to a Mr. John Smith, 61 Walnut Street, who had been in hospital at the time, and had sent the message back to the company "just yesterday," and then the company had hurried it on to the home of the gentleman now speaking. John hung up, and turned away. No use trying to attend her funeral now—poor old Momsie! And none of her own blood so low as to do her reverence! Jim Smith had been over in Europe. He went moping round from room to room.

As soon as he had become presentable, he thought, he would pack and go to Safe Center, there to explain to neighbors and friends his seeming indifference about his mother's death.

It suddenly came over him that his mother had never seen these magnificent rooms, never even been invited to see them. He had meant, as soon as he had got well started in his studies, to send for his mother and to have her keep his house for him throughout his university career. Now the fact that he had never so much as hinted to her of such a possibility, smote his heart like a knife. "Poor old Momsie!"

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He kept on roaming, disconsolate and grief stricken, from one fine apartment into another. Then back again. He came at length to the oriental court with the purple fountain in its center. As he was about to sit on a marble bench beside its cool, comfortable plashings, he happened to remember the slip of paper sticking out of the book in his—his uncle's—library.

Slowly he moped back to his chief "study." Then, going to the broken bookcase, he mounted a stool, reached down the book, and withdrew the paper.

Having read it, he folded it carefully up again, and placed it in his pocket with the telegram. The book he replaced mechanically upon its shelf.

Slowly he groped back to the couch on which he had awakened. Moaning slightly, he lay down.

The full purport of the writing which he had taken from the book had not, as yet, permeated to his consciousness.

A will! A will by John Gridley, of Duluth. Why *what* will? *What* will? Uncle John's will had already been filed in the court-house, there in Duluth, just at the rise of the bluff, beyond the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. What piece of foolishness, then, was this?

Ah yes! The explanation came over him. This was an old, old document—a will which his uncle had made in the earlier days when still he could

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believe that Claud was a gentleman. Nothing else than that. Uncle John had simply neglected to destroy this older will.

To assure himself on this head, John took out the document again and examined it. In the attestation clause he found the date referred to, and he read once more, as in a vague dream. “. . . signed, sealed, published and declared by the testator to be his said last will and testament, in the presence of each of us, the undersigned, who thereupon, at his request, and in his presence, and in the presence of each other, have hereunto subscribed our names as the attesting witnesses thereof, the day and year last above written.” He repeated, “the day and year last above written,” then looked again at the date. Exactly two years later than the date of the will under and by virtue of which John held this glorious palace. But—here was the real matter after all—was the will genuine? He could not think so.

Still—by all the gods of fairness and his own noble blood, if it *were* genuine, then Claud should have this house and all the rest of the fortune. He would not steal another man’s house, another man’s fortune.

For a moment a voice whispered, “Destroy the will. Does any one else know? Even if any one does, how could he ever show this will if you destroyed it? Destroy it.”

John arose from the sofa, and staggered as straight

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to the phone as he could go. "Hanover six-seven-six." The telegraph company was reached. "Take a message?" "Yes, sir." "MR. EDWARD PROTEUS, ARROWHEAD BUILDING, DULUTH. HAVE FOUND IN BOOK OF UNCLE'S LIBRARY A WILL. LATER DATE THAN MINE. LEAVES ALL TO MR. TYRONE. WITNESSES ARE B. J. WHEELER AND PLOTHEART WEMS. WILL IS ON LETTER-HEAD OF THORWALD FESSER, ATTORNEY. YOU INVESTIGATE GENUINENESS AND INFORM ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. JOHN SMITH."

He struggled back to the sofa, and lay there, as it seemed, for a thousand years. The door-bell rang. The butler softly stepped into the dining-room, and seeing John's eyes open, said: "Mr. Claud Tyrone wishes to know if you have gone out."

"Tell him I'm at home, but won't receive him."

"Yes, sir."

John heard the butler's voice, a few seconds later. "Mr. Smith is at home, sir, but much too sick to see you. He begs that you will call again."

John rang for his valet. After a bath and change of clothes, he felt less like a dead man, and began to prepare for a trip to his mother's grave. Over the phone he made a Pullman reservation, then hung up, and was about to go back to his couch, when suddenly the phone rang again. "Western Union.

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MR. JOHN SMITH, 61 ELM ROAD, GRANVILLE. HAVE LEARNED BOTH WITNESSES ARE DEAD. THEIR SIGNATURES HOWEVER COULD BE PROVED BY THOSE KNOWING THEIR HANDWRITING. ATTORNEY YOU MENTION SAYS DID NOT DRAW UNCLE'S WILL BUT UNCLE HIMSELF WHO HAD STUDIED LAW DREW IT ON ATTORNEY'S PAPER AND IN HIS OFFICE. ATTORNEY BEING OLD FRIEND OPPOSED WILL, NOT LIKING BENEFICIARY. NO USE. UNCLE SAID NOTHING TO ME, KNOWING ME ALSO OPPOSED TO BENEFICIARY. HAD LEFT OLDER WILL IN MY HANDS WHICH I SINCERELY BELIEVED HIS LAST. ATTORNEY SAYS DATE YOU GIVE HE BELIEVES TO BE CORRECT. WAS AT ALL EVENTS ON A SAINT PATRICK'S DAY AND HE THINKS YEAR CORRECT. COULD BE MISTAKEN. PROBABLY NOT. SEND WILL FOR MY INSPECTION TO MAKE DOUBLY SURE ABOUT GENUINENESS OF ALL SIGNATURES. EDWARD PROTEUS."

John struggled back to his lounge, pushed a bell for his butler. The butler arrived, John said: "Phone Walnut eighteen eighteen, and then ask Mr. Claud Tyrone to come at once."

"Yes, sir; thank you, sir," said the butler.

CHAPTER XIV
A MOST NOBLE DUKE

CHAPTER XIV

A MOST NOBLE DUKE

JOHN ordered a light luncheon. With this, however, he merely dabbled, and was still at it when Claud came.

"Why, Cousin!" shouted that cheery gentleman. "You look as if you did not enjoy banquets."

John waved the comment aside. After looking Claud straight in the eye for some time, he declared: "Claud, this is your house."

"It ought to have been, I admit," Claud answered without hesitation. "But the old guy that made the spondulix, he had the right to do as he pleased with them. Hence—" He gestured as if passing something over to John. "Hence—to you, *mon cher cousin*. But I don't hold *that* against you. It's rather the deuce of a jab you gave me in the jugular last night. My neck's still sore from it."

"My cousin," insisted John, when he had convinced himself that Claud, indeed and in truth, knew nothing of the will that John had discovered. "My cousin, I mean literally what I say. This house is yours. All our uncle's fortune is yours. I have indeed spent part of it. But it is yours nevertheless, all yours. You shall take possession of it without

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contest, without ceremony. And when I have had time to earn the money, I will pay you back the part I have spent."

"Not fully recovered yet," diagnosed Claud, but not in exactly the same skeptical manner as before. "You'll get over this delusion very shortly."

"It's no delusion," insisted John. He went on to tell the entire story, omitting nothing, toning nothing down, or weakening Claud's case in the slightest respect or strengthening his own.

"Now look here," protested Claud, when, at last, John had finished speaking. "You don't mean to tell me that all this flamboyant doodaddle—house and grounds, the Government bonds, the municipal dittos, and even the real estate on old Superior Street and the side of the big bluff—that all these joyous affairs are mine, and not yours, do you?"

"That's precisely what I mean." John took out the will and handed it to him.

Claud read it. "Hum! I seem to have got it in the easiest way. I'll mail this back to Duluth for filing."

"No," objected John, with sudden suspicion at Claud's quick acceptance of the situation. "I want to send it first to Mr. Proteus. He's asked for it, and he's to investigate the genuineness of the signatures. If he says 'genuine,' as of course he almost certainly will, you'll get this back. The property then is yours."

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Claud showed a little hesitation about returning the will. At length he did give it back, saying: "One thing sure, my dear little Johnny, and that is that I, being a good judge of human nature, can trust you implicitly. If you were not absolutely trustworthy, you would never have shown me this in the first place, or even have wired to Mr. Proteus. When the will comes back, and I place before you the women and the wine—"

"Into the lake with the women and the wine!" interrupted John, almost with a shriek. "Claud—I did not mean to tell you—my mother is dead."

"Dead! Your mother! Poor chap! I'm very sorry, John."

"And the worst is that the messages about her miscarried, and so I didn't know till a few hours back. She's been dead two weeks. Yes, more. There are other John Smiths, you see. Blessed be the name of Smith."

"I see."

"Mother may have left me a little something. I am going to go to see her—to her— I forgot— See her grave—tonight. If she's left me anything, I will give it all to you—to cover—to pay—what I've squandered—a fool—a fool— O Mother, Mother!" The words were like a cry from purgatory.

Claud went to a window and looked out. "A hell

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of a day to have your mother dead on. I remember when mine died."

"You won't push me, Claud—if the will's genuine—you won't—push me for what I owe?"

"Push you! Why, John Smith, you're a man in ten million. You're a genuine duke, a nobleman. Push—of course not."

Claud came up, patted John on the shoulder, and went brusquely off, consoling backward: "Try, *try*, John, to take it in the easiest way."

CHAPTER XV
TOO OLD AND TOO YOUNG

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TOO OLD AND TOO YOUNG

JOHN went to Safe Center and returned. The will had then got back from Mr. Proteus. That attorney declared the signatures to be all genuine, and the will to be holographic—i.e., in the writing of the testator himself. There could be no doubt about these things. He had also talked with Mr. Fesser again, and Mr. Fesser had been quite certain, just as before, that the will had been drawn on a St. Patrick's day. Of the year he could not be quite so sure, but he thought it was the year that was mentioned in the document. Anyway, he very distinctly remembered playfully calling Mr. Gridley an Irishman for making his will on St. Patrick's day, also that Mr. Gridley had replied that he was half Irish and half English, and that, probably, the only proper day for making wills was April Fool's day, inasmuch as most of the beneficiaries under wills turned out to be impudent and improvident wretches who were much more harmed than helped by the money they received, and which had been gathered together by other hands than theirs.

John winced as he read the last words. Mr. Proteus might have left *them* out. He phoned for Claud.

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When Claud had come, John handed him the will.

It seemed quite natural to John that his Uncle Gridley, after having made a will in his, John's favor, in a moment of sharp pique against Claud, should later have repented, and become so far reconciled to his own flesh and blood as to make this second testament. There had always been, as John had clearly understood, a strong antipathy between his Uncle Gridley and his own mother. John's mother had not wanted her husband's sister, Anne, to marry Uncle John, for John's mother had been a bit foolishly proud of her English ancestry, also a bit too much opposed to Uncle John's habit of playing poker far into the night and for money. Uncle John had later become a model husband, and, after his wife had died, a model member of a very strict church. But he never had quite forgiven "Evangeline" for her bitter opposition to him in his role of brother-in-law. Thus it was that Uncle John had never come to see the Smiths in their Iowa home. Thus, too, it was that, when John's father had insisted that his son should bear the name of John Gridley, and the name had been conferred, and Uncle John duly apprised thereof, Uncle John had not answered the letter. True it was that Uncle John, on each of his namesake's birthdays had sent him a little (never a substantial) present, together with a note of stern advice and fond congratulation. Yet, after all,

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Claud *was* Uncle John's own flesh and blood. He had also been a kind of young companion to the old uncle on many a hunting and fishing trip. In a word, he must have been far more like a son—howsoever bad his habits—to Uncle John, than he, John Smith, whom Uncle John had never really deigned to set eyes on.

Claud glanced at the will nonchalantly, put it in his pocket. "Too bad," he said, "old bird, to lose your property just at the moment of your expulsion—er—"

"Expulsion!"

Claud started back. "Keep your shirt on, sweetheart. You gave a dickens of a bad banquet, and some of the boys have squealed. None of the Bomb-shell Brood—some of the others—I— Don't look at *me* like that. What, more money? I thought you meant to draw a gun."

John had taken from his pocket a draft. This he endorsed, then tendered it to Claud. "Two thousand—a little over. One thousand was the money I'd sent her as soon as I knew, or thought I knew, that I was rich. The rest is the money she had saved for years, meaning some day to set me up in business."

"And *you* have—"

"Nothing but these." John held out his two smallish hands. "As to my expulsion—"

"And your gray matter."

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"I haven't any. I've never had a trial either, before the faculty about that banquet. I'm going now to see someone."

He ran out of the great house bareheaded, and on and on to Central Hall. Professor Harkness, head of his "advisory committee," was just coming out of the building.

John ran up, quite out of breath. "I hear—Mr. Harkness—I hear—I have heard—expulsion—I have heard that I've been expelled. I've—made mistakes—I—"

"Come in here," suggested Mr. Harkness, quietly.

John followed the tall gray man back into the building, then to a private room.

Mr. Harkness closed the door. "Sit down."

John remained standing. "I—expelled?"

"No, you're not expelled," reassured Mr. Harkness. "We don't expel any one without a hearing. But your case is billed for trial. If the facts are as alleged, you will certainly be expelled. There are people—I will not call them students—whom we cannot possibly keep in Granville University. You are charged with having neglected your studies, having squandered money lavishly, having haunted dens of vice in the criminal districts of Granville (even visiting the so-called Sob Stuff Inn), also with having given in your own home a banquet which might have shamed the ancient Greeks and Romans."

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John requested a bill of exact particulars. Got it. Then he burst out crying, hearing all the lies that had come from those who had catered at his banquet and received exorbitant wages. None of the tales, it appeared, had reached the University authorities by way of student lips. John, in his heart, thanked God for at least this bit of unexpected loyalty.

He went over to the window, full of shame for his over-sensitive soul and that his distorted face might not be seen. When he had got command of himself, he returned to speak with Mr. Harkness. Then he told the old teacher all: the inheritance of his fortune, his desire to seem to be a real man by knowledge of the grosser aspects of America, his giving of the banquet—only, however, with the stipulation that no liquor should be brought to the feast or any disreputable characters. He did not mention Claud's name, but he told of the treachery and tricks of a certain student whom he did not wish to designate—the drugging of his coffee, and its drugging again. He also spoke of the revels in the street, when he knew not what he was doing, the return to the house, his boxing-match and his own final "knocking-out." "What occurred after that," said John, "I do not know."

Finally he told of the telegrams about his mother's death, their accidental delay, his trip to Iowa as soon as he had learned the truth.

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A tear glistened in Mr. Harkness' eye. John saw it, and took hope. Mr. Harkness said, "I am very glad you have told me all these things, Mr. Smith. I see that you speak the truth. But I do not think that, even going by your own recital, we ought to keep you any longer. We don't, as a rule, expel large bodies of students, even when these have done very wrong, for that would be impractical. But we do attempt to get rid of those who appear to be the ring leaders. This banquet occurred in your house."

Then John disclosed the fact that he was a very poor man. Told all the pitiful story about the wills—the mistake that Mr. Proteus, consequently John himself, had made, in supposing John to be a rich man; the finding of the second will; the reporting thereof by John himself both to Mr. Proteus and Claud.

"And have you made restitution to your cousin?"

"I have."

"Complete?"

"Nothing left but these"—holding out his two smallish hands. "My mother left me a trifle over two thousand dollars. One thousand I had sent to her as soon as I learned—I supposed—I was rich. The other—" He put his face in his hands.

"Her own savings, John?"

"Yes. She had meant me—to use it—business, you know."

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"I see. Now that's gone, too. Thank God. You are really quite poor?"

John looked up in astonishment. "Why—I *said* 'nothing but these.' "

"I have hopes for you," encouraged Mr. Harkness. "If you are cursed with absolutely no money whatever, I have hopes. You possess more than just your two hands, John. You are endowed with honesty and brains—the greatest of all possessions. Your poverty will make you work; and then you will win success. You'll have dollars again—your own dollars, this time. And every single one of them will be an angel, not a devil. I'm going to take the liberty of quashing that complaint against you. Do you want any help from the University authorities in finding a place to work?"

John laughed such a clear, silvery laugh that the heart of the old professor was uplifted, and his mind was filled with recollections of the days when he himself could laugh so. "I'll help the University some day," John declared with the lofty assurance of youth and its clear consciousness of strength. "Service to the world, you know." He shook hands with Mr. Harkness for the split part of a second, thanked him, rushed off.

John had no difficulty whatever in finding a little basement bedroom, the rent of which he would be permitted to pay for with a very few light chores

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done at night. Then he went to the Luxembourg House, got together a few clothes, put them in a satchel, did up his university text-books with paper and string, and so, carrying his burdens with strong hands and a light heart, made back to his new and far different abode.

So far so good. But when he went out to look for work, he found that the jobs were all taken. Fear began to grip at his heart. Well, he would not go back to Mr. Harkness and ask for a job, anyway. Returning to his basement, he did his chores, got all his lessons, had a long, sound sleep—the first for many a week.

Next day, between classes, he again hunted for work. No work. That night, lessons again.

Next day was Saturday. He presented his plight to an Irish policeman. He had always thought of the city police as a kind of advisers-in-general to humanity.

"Come here out of the racket," ordered Mr. Blue-cloth. "*Now* tell me."

John told all his tale again, and with much repetition and other forms of prolixity. He was, in fact, getting considerably excited over this little problem of finding a job.

"*Findin'* a job, is it?" asked the policeman, when, at length, John had completed his tale. "*Findin'* a job? Got any brains?"

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"No." John laughed as well as he could.

"Thought not. Otherwise you'd be *makin'* jobs for other payple, 'stead o' askin' 'em for yourself. There's two kind o' payple in the world, as to jobs. Them as makes jobs, an' them as takes jobs. Me, I'm an ignorant man. So I *takes* this job. You're an edjicated man, sir, you understand me; an' so it's up to you to make jobs for others. Get into business."

"But I—"

"An' say, if you want any *advice* hereafter, go to your own professors. The trouble with you stoodents is that you don't trust thim as best understands you and has your own best interest at heart. Get me? Get *that*? These very professors is, the greater part av thim, true blue min. All manhood, sir. I know 'em. They works like the divil for half, yes quarther, the mazooma they could make outside thim buildin's (fer they got a hankerin' they *got* to teach) but they're all there on the manhood question, the greather part av thim. An' so—

"You're much too sinsitive, young man. You're all excitemint, as I plainly persave. Now av ye go troo the world like this, wit' a t'in hide, and de finer sinsibilities uppermost, and so on, ye're doomed to failure. I tell ye ye're doomed to failure. Half the tramps an' hoboos ain't payple wid calloused sinsibilities as most payple belave. They're payple wid *too great* sinsibilities, an' so they go traipsin' off an'

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traipsin' off—tryin' to escape the ruder contacts wid de world. An' *gettin' 'em instead*. HEAR me? *Gettin' 'em instead*. Say, go into business."

"Where?"

"*Anywhere*. Right here, the closer the bether. Go to that paynut stand yonder, and ask um what 'e wants for the layout."

"But I have no money."

"Buy it wid brass and boldness." He laid the end of his club gently, almost affectionately, on John's left shoulder. "Set aside yure finer sinsibilities. They'll only stand in yure way. And buy that paynut stand wid brass and push. It's a good stand, but its propriaytor ain't makin' money, because he's got too many sinsibilities. He t'inks de chob's beneat' um. But there's mazooma in the place. Mazooma in that pop-corn stand, too, across the strate from us. Nayther av thim min puts brains in 'is business, and naythur av thim has a bit av stoodent trade, whin 'e might have a-a-a-ll av it." The officer was gone.

John pulled his cap down, went over to the little peanut store, and entered. In the front of the room was a peanut roaster. Then came a little show-case full of candy. Shelves behind the show-case, filled with candy-boxes—mostly, as John conjectured, empty. At the back of the room, a wabby counter, or oilcloth-covered packing-case, for soft drinks.

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The proprietor, after a long time, came into the room through the back door. He was dressed in a suit of overalls and a hickory shirt, a silk tie and a flashy stick-pin. He had an aquiline nose, deeply set blue eyes, a large flabby mouth, a three-day stubble, and a bald head.

"How's business?" asked John, very pleasantly.

"Too dead to kick. What the blazes do you want?"

"Your store. Set a price on it."

"Got any money?"

"No. But I can make some, and then I can pay you for the store."

"Ever been in the peanut business?"

"No."

The man came up, took John by the arm, and led him to the light. There he looked him in the eye with very great scrutiny.

John laughed. "No, I'm not crazy. Just ignorant of business. Determined to succeed, though."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-one, past."

"Too old."

"But I can learn the business."

"Not past twenty-one. I like you, young man, I like the cut of your jib. And I expect you're honest. I know you are. If you'd begun in time, too, to learn the peanut business, you could have learned it, and have made a go of it. But you're too old to

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begin learning now." John laid back his head and laughed the heartiest laugh he had had for two whole days. "What! Too old? Too old to learn the peanut business?"

But the owner of the place would have it that there was a very great mystery about the peanut business, which only the very young could penetrate. "You got to begin as a mere child," he dogmatized, speaking of the matter with a kind of profound awe, "and then you got to stick to it till you *are* old." He lowered his voice to a hoarse whisper. "There's a *lot* to learn about peanuts. I began early, and I stuck to it late, an' I ain't learned all about peanuts yet. No use, you're too old. If you bought me out, you'd just break up and I'd never get my money."

John shook hands with the man, after his natural friendly fashion, and left the store. Across the street he saw again the pop-corn plant. Having crossed the roadway, he entered.

"Not a bad plant," thought John. The place was really neat and clean inside, although the exterior had looked dingy. There were two large pop-corn poppers, both of very late design and attractive appearance. A show-case of candies. Shelves with candies in glass jars. A stove in the middle of the rather large room. Half a dozen or a dozen chairs. In one of these a lean, pale-faced man was sitting on his backbone.

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"How's business?" queried John.

The man tried to speak, failed, coughed and spat in a near-by cuspidor. Then he said, "Rotten."

"Thought so," said John. "*I* could take this place and make a go of it—as a gathering place for students. I haven't any money, but I could pay you as I brought the money in."

"How old?"

"Twenty-one."

"Rotten! That all?"

"Yes."

"You ain't old enough to go into business."

John laughed heartily. "I didn't know there was any particular age. I tried to buy out yonder peanut stand, and its owner thought I was *too* old."

"He's a rotten fool. You got to have some maturity to succeed in business—peanuts or pop-corn. When you're thirty-one, come in and see me."

John ignored the dismissal. "Give you a hundred dollars for the layout."

"You're a rotten fool. I tell you you're too young. It takes old heads to learn this business."

John thought to be equally frank. "You've got consumption, and you ought to go to Florida."

"Doctor says so."

"You're not clearing a cent. I can make this old plant hum—health, strength, acquaintance with many students, youth."

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"Too *much* youth. Get out. I ain't goin' to sell to you."

"If I can bring a hundred dollars worth of business in here this very night, will you still say that I'm too young?"

"Blazes no. But you can't do it."

"Let me try?"

"Yes. Dead cats, yes! You can't make things rottener than they be. But you're too young."

John got soap, rags and water, and washed the big front window whereon was not the slightest lettering. Then he went out and returned with blue and red lettering-chalk, and, having a little knack at drawing, lettered temporarily the wide and lofty window-pane as follows:

DUCAL POP-CORN PALACE DUKE OF DULUTH, PROPRIETOR

Re-entering the shop, he said to Old Man Pop-corn, "Better get up and tidy round a little; there'll be business here tonight."

"You're too young," persisted Mr. Pop-corn.

John hastened away to the gym, where he knew he should find Hoop-skirts, Billy, and the rest of that energetic brood. These had already heard about the ducal fall from pelf and power, and were full of unfeigned sympathy for the erstwhile rich man. John told them his scheme. "We'll do it," shouted

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Stilts. Hoop-skirts bellowed, "All start out and distribute the command!"

Away they went (all but Claud, who sulked off to his Luxembourg House) scattering like a "bomb-shell" sure enough.

John ran back to the pop-corn palace. The miserable old consumptive had arisen, and, in spite of weakness and depression, or perhaps because of those very qualities, had washed John's lettering off the window. "Don't do no good," he justified, as John regarded the window with much surprise. "Everybody knows where *I* am: been here thirty year. Rotten!" John ran away, ate a hearty supper, returned, took the liberty of restoring the letters to the window (laughing and telling stories as he did so) and set the shop itself to rights by the time the students had begun pouring in.

CHAPTER XVI

THE HEAD DOES NOT REALLY KNOW ANY-
THING WHICH HAS NOT COME TO IT
THROUGH THE HEART

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THE HEAD DOES NOT REALLY KNOW ANYTHING WHICH HAS NOT COME TO IT THROUGH THE HEART

NEXT morning (Sunday) John had in his pocket a bill of sale for all the stock and fixtures in his pop-corn "palace," also a transfer of the former owner's lease. He had also learned how to sterilize the place, and had sterilized it. The old consumptive had his satchel packed for Florida (chiefly owing to the assistance of John) and a ticket to St. Petersburg in his overcoat pocket. "You're too young," he said, despondingly, as John helped him on his train, "but mebbe you can learn the business—in time. You're a hum-dinger, sure, but— Never forget to fudge on butter, and give plenty of salt. It's rotten to use too much butter."

John never fudged on butter, salt or corn, or on candy or gum, soda-pop, sandwiches, or any of the other articles which he sold. And he did a thriving business. High-brows, low-brows, and brows of medium dimensions all foregathered, nights and holidays, in John's little shop. That shop became a central office for the interchange of news and of all sorts and kinds of information. There was never

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any drunkenness there, or telling of obscene tales. There was, however, plenty of friendship. John knew by a kind of instinct that business is, at bottom, simply friendship—friendship and that willingness to serve on which true friendship rests. But the “brass and push” idea he owed to the Irish policeman, and he never forgot that man—even in the days when he drove a far better paying business than this. At ten o’clock the shop always closed, no matter how great the throng had become or how intense the hilarity. Then, for John—study.

John was first in all his classes. He worked with a grim vigor and indefatigable determination that had never been surpassed at Granville University. Surprised he was, too, to see how differently all his teachers began to appear to him in these, his working days, from the way in which they had seemed in his time of wealth and luxury. Not that these men were, without exception, ideal. But John soon learned to analyze and appraise them accurately, to see the gold within the necessary dross of their natures.

One of the teachers, a Mr. Alsyke, he catalogued as pedantic, slangy, deeply scientific, lyrical, prurient and low. Alsyke took up half his hour in telling suggestive stories, with, now and then, a streak of poetry in them. He had somehow got from the students the nickname of “Pep.” He was very popular, but, underneath the popularity, John per-

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ceived a great contempt—even among those students who laughed loudest at his long, salacious tales. But he spoke of chemistry almost like a god, and John absorbed his chemistry and let his excrementitious matters go.

Another instructor was witty, epigrammatic, satiric, socialistic, nihilistic, fond (it seemed) of nothing, and, apparently, contemptuous of everything. Some of his students called him "The Stomach Ache." But John discerned, beneath his destructive qualities, an overmastering desire to reconstruct the world on an idealistic basis. The ideals of this man were, in fact, repugnant to John, who, by his very instincts, abhorred the notion of people prospering quite alike, regardless of ability, enterprise and character. He also saw the futility of all such schemes. But he perceived, under the absurdities of this professor's teachings, the very soul of the man: a great, clean soul, almost divinely discontented with the chaos and disorder of this terribly modern and frightfully immoral world.

There was big old burly William Gay. He taught geology—the structure of the earth, gentlemen—and he looked almost large enough and authoritative enough to have built that planet himself. "No telling what he *might* have done," admitted Hoop-skirts, to whom John broached the foregoing idea. Hoops himself was beginning to like geology—now

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that John had taken such an interest in the subject. Gay used to begin each lecture by remarking, "Well, here we are again, gentlemen." But then, after this superfluous introduction, he would seem to become suddenly inspired, and, as he looked down toward the world beneath him, you could almost see the planet turn to glass merely in order that it might exhibit to even the dullest students of Professor Gay of Granville University its otherwise mysterious constitution. John got from this man the power to think clearly, to speak clearly—to know and to know that he knew, or else to know that he did not know, perhaps that he could never know: then to speak or write accordingly.

Strangely enough, from his young professor of English, Mr. Wharl, he did not learn either how to speak or how to write. Those very desirable accomplishments, as we have seen, he secured from the professor of geology. But out of the lips of Wharl he caught a glorious love of nature. The soul of the world came out of its hiding and revealed itself to him in all its unspeakable glory, whenever this wide-eyed, glad-eyed lover of life released himself from a few absolutely necessary animadversions on mixed metaphors and unorganic paragraphs, and turned to the subject-matter that he loved. How gladly Wharl set his students writing on "The Pine Tree's Song" or "The Sleep of the Butterfly." Not any sentimen-

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tal trash, you understand, but the actual, beautiful things. "Butterflies do sleep, gentlemen." He told them when and how. "And the beauty of the butterfly as it sits dreaming needs no additions or exaggerations." The students then, at his bidding, observed butterflies asleep—not by day (as in the case of moths) but at night. Some rested on limbs with wings folded vertically together, so that they resembled dead leaves (but still they were beautiful) and with their heads safely drawn back between their wings; others on bare ground with wings that angels might have envied for their splendor, wide apart and palpitating. At first the students watched these things through Wharl's own clear, clean, large, marvelling eyes; afterwards through their own. They did not, it is true, learn from Wharl to make great literature, but from him they acquired a life-long love for God's universe.

Abelard Green was very different from Wharl. He often left a puckery taste in your mouth. He was full professor of mathematics. Tall, lean, dark, impassive and unapproachable, he used to stand in front of a window, by the side of a long blackboard, pointer in hand, expounding conic sections to the outside sky. Inhuman he sometimes seemed in his great abstractness and abstruseness. Some students liked him, some did not. He went by the name of "Matthew"—said to be an abbreviation of "Mat-

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thew Mattix." Also by that of "Temp.," said (ironically) to be an abbreviation of "The Artistic Temp." At first repelled by the strangely impersonal and awfully distant character of this man, John came in time to love him, to revere him for the divine sublimity of those thin, incorporeal conceptions which he so impersonally taught. His ideas were *mere* ideas of quantity and form, abstracted out of that beautifully concrete world of Mr. Wharl—possessed, therefore, of no existence whatsoever save in the minds that entertained them. And yet they were filled with a beauty far surpassing that which Mr. Wharl knew, because their beauty was one that could never die, decay, even alter—not so much an expression or manifestation of God's mind, as a portion, howsoever minute, of that very mind itself.

The teachers of economics and of history were both good, average men—nothing to brag about. They knew their subjects thoroughly, bored the students half to death, themselves three-quarters, made uninteresting beginnings and lame, inconsequential, vapid conclusions. They often talked after the warning-bell had rung, for which reason many of the students in the backs of their lecture-rooms slipped quietly out, one by one, till Judd or Lemon (these were the actual surnames of these teachers—the students never honored them with nicknames), would suddenly wake up, look up, flush up, and remark:

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"Better go, gentlemen." With which sublime conclusion ringing in their ears, the boys would leave pell-mell. John used to wonder why the English of these instructors was so excruciatingly bad, and why they did not study English composition with Professor Gay.

Professor Brigand was nicknamed "Pirate." Everybody loved this bloodless buccaneer, esteemed him too for his tremendous range of information. He was a small, gray, gentle old chap, with a softly sarcastic manner and a deeply affectionate soul. He taught "moral philosophy," otherwise known as "ethics." He had a classic taste in everything, but called his students by their given names, and patted them on their shoulders. John loved him deliriously and learned the absurdest doctrines from him passionately.

But John worked hardest in the course which he took with Scaligera's father, Professor Alexander von Humboldt Van Dusen. This gnarled little, insignificant-seeming man (un-Greek in manner as in bodily form) was nevertheless a true bearer of the light, a veritable Lampadephorus. John knew not how it was but he came to love this being better even than Wharl or Abelard Green. All the spirit of the ancient Greeks seemed to re-live in him. The world, the life, the light! Sadly and in a soft, sweet monotone the old professor droned along, emphasizing

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nothing in particular, apparently as unimaginative and as unenthusiastic as the mournful cadence of the midnight wind at door or window, and yet, as the moaning proceeded, John threw open the windows and doors of his own soul and let the wandering spirit in. John never wholly understood this man's power over him. In part, no doubt, as John very well knew, it arose from the fact that John's father had always wished that John might specially excel in Greek and Latin. Partly, too, it arose from the fact that John desired this excellence on his own account. But, mostly, perhaps, the influence grew out of the fact that Professor Van Dusen had caught the fine friendship spirit of the ancient Greeks, that spirit which seemed to underlie or interfuse their culture absolutely, so that the souls of all who heard this tiny professor were opened at his words. Whatever the cause, the influence was a fact, and John could but marvel that Scaligera, growing up as she had done, with such a father, could become (howsoever attractive she might be in other respects) so narrowed and affixed to the mere husk and shell of classical learning, and could see and understand so little of the fine kernel within.

Why, even old Hoop-skirts felt the influence of Professor Van Dusen, and "punished" Greek assiduously.

Poor old Hoops! How John loved him too! John's

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soul was full of love in those days (love soon to change to bitterest misanthropy) love for his old professors, for his student friends, for his studies, for his rapidly growing business, for the never-fading memory of the great bluff at Duluth, and its little blue-eyed Jean supporting her invalid mother and practising the Christ-like, ever old yet ever new, doctrine of "service to the world." He often wondered how her electric ship-steering device was getting along.

John would go back to Duluth some day: he was always promising this to himself—spite of certain drawbacks. He was very homesick for Duluth. He had wanted to go back long ere now, but his pride had not permitted.

CHAPTER XVII

JEAN AND MAGNOLIA BOTH WRITE

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JEAN AND MAGNOLIA BOTH WRITE

JEAN, when John had left her, on his way to the Omaha depot, had sped back like an arrow in the way by which she had come down. She very well knew that she took a chance on being caught in the rapidly gathering storm. Yet she could not decide to show her anguished and tear-stained face to a carful of people on the Incline Railway.

Louder and louder grew the thunder—nearer and nearer. Once, when the lightning whitened the whole great bluff as if that structure had suddenly turned to molten iron, she turned and looked off over the ravening waste of waters. But the scene she beheld so cowed and terrified her, that she turned quickly again and ran on up the bluff. There had been a great passenger steamer just putting out through the Gateway of the World.

She reached the steep brow of the bluff altogether out of breath, but moved on, slowly, slowly, hand to side, shuddering, gasping, loving John dearly, condemning him, then forgiving him everything, and, once more, feeling as if she should surely die of shame and anguish at her lover's implied accusation.

All at once heaven and earth seemed to explode in

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a blinding crash of sound and light. Once more she dared to look at the Lake. The steamer had just reached the outside water—barely in safety. If only steamers had better ways of steering!

Came another peal that appeared to shake the earth's foundations. Almost immediately afterward, and very close beside her, uprose a similar bellow, not quite so loud perhaps, but still more awful and fuller of ironic, even sarcastic quality, as if the bluff itself had found full throatage, and now, in deep terrestrial anger, mimicked the disturbing divinities of the sky. Then she remembered. Andy!

By the light of another flash she saw him. There in the mouth of his storm-cave, wild-eyed, angry with the anger of crass superstition and deep-seated insanity, flinging out contemptuous wide hands and deep vocal mockery to the godlets of the storm.

"Ho!" he shouted, when he saw Jean. "They can't get me, not here. My fadduh he tell me so to come. He tell me in a dream, and be out of danger from de storm. Sperits, dey make it, make de storm. But de storm dey catch me not here. Ah—sperits! Bah! Boom ber-oom-boom-boom!"

Jean was glad in her heart to hear and see old Andy. She was not very far from home now. "Yes, Andy!" she cried, to comfort the poor crazed man. "You're just as safe as safe can be here. Do not worry."

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"But you, you ain't safe," he shouted after her. "Hurry home. You too koot-looking to be out in storms at night. Pesides, I anuddah tream hat last night. And my fadduh he say in de tream dat you kot much, yes, fery, fery much trouble and galamity foh to ko troo with. Hurry home."

She did not need insistence, and, a few moments later, was at her mother's side. But her mother, in spite of the storm, was softly sleeping.

Arrived in her own room upstairs, Jean buried her face in her hands, and, for a long, long time, her lithe young body was racked with sobs. Morning found her lonely, fearful and sickening.

All that day Miss Banyard gazed upon her with suspicious, and Mr. Proteus with sympathetic, eyes. Jean, in spite of her attempt to behave as usual, knew that these two people were bringing forth numerous conjectures concerning her, each after his own kind.

By day Jean did well enough. But, at night! It is in the night that visions come, visions of what should surely have been, but now may never be. Every evening, after the dinner dishes had been washed and dried and Mother Margaret attended to, Jean would go upstairs, seat herself, lean back with a sigh of utter exhaustion. Her fingers were stiff, her arms numb, there was a slight dizziness at the back of her head. She could only gaze stolidly at her work-

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bench, her electrician's and wood-worker's tools, and the half-completed model of her steering-apparatus. If her father had only left her just a little more money! She was giving out.

Sometimes the view of the Lake would yield her comfort, and she would draw her bed to a place from which, whenever she awoke, she could look off over the Lake and receive its solemn messages of peace, its infinite benediction. But again the Lake seemed not to comfort her, rather to fill her with an agony of fear and longing: of fear because of her father's fate, of longing because of John. On such occasions something seemed to guide her gaze to the great Gateway, as John had taught her to call the Aerial Bridge, and then, taking her forth farther still, would show her all the depressing earth, its sorrows, its losses, its pains. Then she would pull down the curtain, and attempt to forget that the Lake lay like a great lake of lead in plain sight of her window.

One day Mr. Proteus dictated that letter to John, the letter of which we have already spoken. And when he had finished, he said: "Jean, my girl! Jean—I wish—you'd write this fine young man a letter. His mother has lately died—so I've learned from friends in Iowa—and he therefore has nobody now to guide him. He needs clean help." A moment later, "Don't give him up too soon. He's a very fine young man." So Jean decided to write.

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But, night after night, she put the matter off, her pride rebelling, even though she now understood that John was even poorer than herself, and although she had been instructed and urged time and again to write by the authoritative Mr. Proteus. Somehow she always preferred (when not too deeply exhausted by the labors of the day and by depressing thoughts about John) to labor at her invention. Her father, she had not forgotten, would never have gone beneath the waters of Lake Superior had there been in his day a competent steering-apparatus.

Then, one night, the right mood came upon her, and she wrote to John. She was full of sublime pity, that evening, for the fine young man who had been so exalted by wealth and then had been suddenly cast down. She put it clearly, however, at the very beginning of the missive, that she was writing at Mr. Proteus' suggestion of some time back. Still, she let it leak out plainly enough, before she had got clear through, that she wrote at greater length than that suggestion would have seemed to necessitate. Mr. Proteus, she told John, was much too busy to write to him himself, otherwise, as she understood the matter, Mr. Proteus would have written John a good, long fatherly letter. At first she had put it "letter of advice," but that seemed patronizing. Besides, a "fatherly" letter might be either a letter of advice or a letter of affection and good wishes. She would

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let her reader interpret the expression to suit himself. She did hope, however, that he would take it both ways. "Mr. Proteus," she added, "is very anxious lest you forget Duluth." Mr. Proteus had, furthermore, said to her lately that he did hope John would, some day, return to Duluth. So she told John that also.

She went on to describe the life at the office, told numerous amusing anecdotes of people who had recently moved into the city, and who, as yet, had not become fully accustomed to "life upon the rocks."

"It's spring, now, on the bluff," she went on, "late spring, verging into summer. The earlier days of spring here are a bit windy and raw—'tonic' the realtors call them. But the later portion of the season is incomparable, according to those who should know.

"As for me, I've seen but little of the outer world, viewing it mostly as it comes to our doors 'by sail or rail,' or again moves away—chiefly through the Big Gate. Yet I feel very certain that at no time and no where else on this globe is there more delightful weather than at this season in Duluth.

"The day that has just passed has been especially beautiful. In the morning, as I sent my curtain up, I could see the Wisconsin shore like a blue-gray fairyland. The ships, docks and elevators, all the way between, looked like midgets' toys. The Wis-

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consin hills were draped in mystery and high romance. The winds came racing in across the bay and up the house-built bluff, hallooed 'Good Morning,' and were gone again. As I went to work, the little hollows in the bluff-side were filled to their brims with sunlight and with a dry, almost caressing, air. The touch of the air was balm and benediction to my wounded soul, a cup of healing." She erased the "wounded," and in its place wrote "sick and tired." "Even the titanic slabs of gray, tawny, and dull red rock, which, on other days, seem present merely as bars to further building, appear, on a day like this, to be bits of contrast to set forth and clearly emphasize the more than Italian softness of the atmosphere.

"It is night now, as I pen these words. Mother is sleeping, and all the world is still—except, at times, the faint, far calls of freight trains running westward or of steamers slipping east.

"In so great a silence the fancy is easily stirred, and I am moved to think how brief a time has passed since all these mighty structures began to arise here at the Head of the Lakes. Looking through my window and over the moonlit landscape, I behold the old Indians again. There they go—a birch bark canoe full of them. How swiftly the craft shoots out of St. Louis Bay, and turns east by south! Another canoe, yet another still! A war party!

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"They are slipping to the natural entry, there by shadowy Allouez. Under the turbulent waters of that pass, the Great Evil Spirit, the Midji Manitou, holds a restless habitation. To propitiate that spirit and make him favorable to their expedition, they drop into the disturbed water many gifts—sacks of wild rice, leaves of tobacco, stone pipes, arrows and bows, fruits, kettles filled with choice meats. Each gift has a stone attached so that it may surely sink deep and reach the dwelling of the Evil One.

"But yonder, on Minnesota Point—a bonfire! The canoes are making for that. Then I remember. It is Black Eagle Night. Over here in Minnesota dwell the Sioux, there in Wisconsin the Ojibways. A great battle has already taken place in Wisconsin between these deadly enemies. The Ojibways have won. They have captured hundreds of prisoners, among them the great Sioux chief, Black Eagle. Having eaten all their other captives, they are now taking the chief to Minnesota Point, there to torture him for long, long hours, before they finally kill and eat him also. They are going to the Point, because the Sioux who are still over here are raising a rescue party, and, on the easily defended Point, the Ojibways will be able to repulse the attack.

"Night after night I see again the old Indian days, picturing first one and then another of many recorded scenes. It is a great spot, this, full of memories of

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Hiawatha, Minnehaha, Paupukkeewis, and all the rest of 'the men and women of that other day.'

"Mother is restless in her sleep now. She will soon be calling, and I must close."

Jean came near adding, "God bless you, my dear boy. I know you are good and noble, and I love you truly." But, of course, she forebore.

She laid the letter under her pillow and slept soundly—far more soundly than for many a long month.

But, in the morning, before she had dressed, she drew the letter out and looked it over—there in the cold, calm, critical light of day. And the thing appeared to her then to be a very forward and unmaidenly missive indeed. So she tore it to small shreds and threw the pieces angrily from her window, watching for a time the wild winds lifting them up and up, and then bearing them on and on, over the city roofs and away, farther and farther toward the great Gate of the World.

John would have given the universe, had it been one flawless diamond, just to have known that Jean had written that letter. But he was not to know, not even in the days when a tragedy of blood had come between Jean and himself, and all the earth seemed to him as black as the blackest of funeral palls.

Meantime, Miss Banyard had written John a

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letter which she did not tear up. She, on the contrary, slipped it with her fat, squabby hands, through a slot inside the post office. A rather suspicious person in all matters was Miss Banyard. She would not trust even an outside letter-box.

CHAPTER XVIII
NO JEAN, NO DULUTH

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NO JEAN, NO DULUTH

JOHN, as we have said, looked at his teachers with an altogether different eye when he had ceased to be a spender, and become an earner, of money—that is to say, when he had turned producer and giver, instead of mere receiver and waster, of service. The whole character of the school's instruction became more serious to him, more solid, substantial and truthful—more clearly related to human existence and to that love which makes existence worthy. He knew very well that some of his teachers did not appreciate the importance of their calling; were filled, rather, with a sense of their own great futility: but the most of the men who taught at Granville really put forth energy without stint or measure, and with a self-denial and self-devotion beyond all praise. At first, in his time of idleness and wasting, he had only desired to become a graduate of a noted university in order to have the name and fame thereof as a bright tag or label attached to his personality. Now, as he grew more earnest with his double work—his college branches and his store—he studied with extreme diligence, because he clearly saw that a trained and accurate mind can give more

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service to the world, either in scholarship or in business, than one whose faculties have never been developed by systematic thought. He recalled the saying of Emerson, "One single idea may have greater weight than the labor of all the men, animals and engines for a century." When he reflected on such themes, his ambition seemed to mount up like a white flame.

On a sad, rainy morning, as he walked across the campus, he was stopped by Scaligera's father, who suggested that he investigate, with an eye to the purchase thereof, "The Eagle Laundry"—a well located, but ill conducted affair, which stood in the very purlieus of the University. This institution had never made its owner any money and was now for sale cheap.

Acting on this suggestion, John thought he would not, at first, enter the laundry like a possible purchaser thereof. Instead, he took with him a package of soiled linen. In the office of the institution he had to wait for a quarter of an hour before he received the slightest notice. A slovenly young girl then merely approached and looked at him. She did not so much as say, "Good morning," or "What do you want?"

"When can I have my laundry back?" asked John.

"Tomorrow morning." Words fairly snapped out.

In the morning his laundry was, of course, not

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ready. He was to come again next day. Next day he came again, also the next. Then his laundry could not even be found. At length it was discovered and returned to him, but with charges down in the bill for articles he had not brought. Correction was made after a waste of nearly an hour, and only in a manner that seemed to treat John himself as the real culprit in the case. While the investigation of the overcharge was making, the proprietor of the institution sat near by, slip-shod, silent, unhelpful and unapologetic, lazily pinching the back of a cat that wished to be petted. "No wonder," thought John, "that he wants to sell his laundry. He can't even sell himself to his own cat."

John made full investigation of the place, noted the absence of other laundries within a considerable distance of the University, took much expert advice, and, finally, went to see his old banker, Mr. Von Bulow. Yes, John could borrow at the bank the little extra money which he needed. He borrowed and he bought.

John did not, however, at once dispose of his popcorn stand. "Don't sink the old boat till you have tried the new one." Then he sold the lesser business—with, however, a pang at his heart for surrendering a long-tryed friend.

John had learned in the University how to make intelligence tests. These he promptly applied in his

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laundry, got rid, by consequence, of all the "dead wood" in its personnel, improved the machinery, put into the business fine courtesy, real friendship, a desire to be of service to the world.

And the world came in droves to his laundry. It loved the real service, the fine friendship, and it came—both the intra- and the extra-mural world. And John "made jobs" for other people—in accordance with the old Hibernian policeman's advice of some years back. Thereby he helped not a few struggling students to pay their own blessed passages to the port of education. And John waxed rich before he had had his bachelor of arts six months.

After his graduation he specialized in economics, business administration, corporation finance. So he seemed to himself to weld into one great unity both his scholarship and his business. He was thought to be intending, after his master of arts had been secured, to try for a Ph.D. He had not, however, fully made up his mind on this head. It would have been, even yet, exceedingly difficult for John to say whether the scholarship or the business had taken greater hold upon him. Each he pursued with boundless energy and enthusiasm. Soon, however, as he knew, he must make the great decision, determine once and forever whether he should become a teacher or other sort of professional man on the one hand, or, on the other, devote himself to business.

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Not a night, in these troublous days, but he dreamed of Duluth. And he ever believed that (in the dream) he was walking along Superior Street, from time to time looking up to the brow of the big bluff, and beholding there—most beautiful of all the dreams that ever he had had in his life—a wondrous assemblage of pillared buildings—a white and gleaming Duluth University. How the massive walls arose and shone! And how their majestic beauty (so he thought in his dream) must have sent their messages shining down the great waters, and so into a waiting and not too intellectual world.

Then he would see Jean coming down the bluff-side with a package of books in her hands. And he would hold his arms out toward her, crying for her mightily. But she, perceiving him, would turn about, and, clambering up the stair, pass out of view.

One January day he could stand the call no longer. He had been rummaging in an old drawer at his rooms, and had found again that letter of Miss Banyard's—to which, by the way, being a bit suspicious of Miss Banyard, he had sent but a cold, conventional answer. Now, as the result of passing years, he was more suspicious still. Miss Banyard had, no doubt, been really asked by Mother Margaret to tell John the truth about the locket, but, when writing, she had added a little touch or two—to

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Jean's manifest and deadly disadvantage. The more John looked at the letter, the plainer it became to him that this was the case. Why had he not been able to see these facts so plainly before?

One good thing had almost been made certain by the letter: the locket was *not* Jean's. Possibly Jean (no matter what Miss Banyard's letter said) had merely borrowed the locket of Miss Banyard because she had thought it beautiful, and without so much as knowing what it contained. Had not Jean, indeed, declared that fact to him, as they two had stood by the side of the Spalding Hotel, that stormy night, when he, picking the locket up, had found the face of the dissolute Claud within it? Strange that years must elapse to let him see these things with distinctness! The letter ran—

MY DEAR MR. SMITH:

You will, I am certain, forgive me for writing to you a social letter, after the very slight acquaintance we have had—at least when you learn the reason for my writing. That reason is this. I happen to know that a certain very worthy young lady (and she is very worthy indeed) is extremely fond of a certain young man who goes by the same name as yourself.

How do I know? Not long since I was at a house called "Morning Glory Cottage"—you know where it stands—and there I met a very friendly lady, Mother Margaret. She also is extremely fond of you, and would, no doubt,

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be looking upon you today as a son of hers, but for a most unfortunate accident which occurred some time ago. What was that accident? You, presumably, are able to guess. At least I shall not inform you. But that locket was *my* locket. And in it was a picture which was *my* picture. This picture had been given to me by its subject—a very delectable, if somewhat wild, young man. She, then, the young lady who thinks so very much of you, begged me over and over again for the loan of that locket. Now the young man whose picture was in that locket was nothing more to me *ever* than a friend—yet a very good friend, for I thought so much of him. Nevertheless, I believed it my duty to insist that that locket, with that picture, must be held by me as a strictly confidential matter, just like, for example, those communications which are made in a lawyer's office. You probably understand. So I refused to lend Jean my locket. But she insisted—this young lady I'm speaking of. She insisted and kept on insisting. I have in my bosom a heart—even if it *is* a rather long way in from the surface. So at last she *reached* my heart. I yielded. I permitted that young lady to wear my locket round her neck—perceiving, of course, that she was absolutely enamored of the young man whose picture lay enshrined within it.

“It seems to me there is no sadder fate
Than to be doomed to loving overmuch.”—WILCOX.

Was she grateful? She certainly was. Never have I seen anybody else so grateful for anything whatever. All just for the privilege, the more possibility, of wearing,

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depended from her own beautiful neck, a picture—which picture had been given to another girl.

Then that young lady came to know *you*. *You* came into her life. (You, I may say, are enough to turn any girl's head, or an older woman's either.) You and Jean became acquainted. You grew to like each other immediately and exceedingly—and who should say you nay? But here comes the point. You went with her to the depot—*she* rather with *you*. You were running, both of you, on account of the approaching storm. Strained by the young lady's undue exertion, possibly struck by her gentle hand, the chain that had held the locket suddenly snapped, broke in two. Away bounded the locket over the sidewalk, breaking its lid open and disclosing to your astonished gaze—the face of her former sweetheart.

How do I know these things? From that young lady's own very mother. Mother Margaret we call her. For, one night, Mother Margaret being sicker than usual, her daughter slept beside her. Then, in the still watches of the dark, she hears her young daughter cry out. Then she hears her tell the story, begging you, finally, not to be offended with her because of her having loved her first young man *too well*. Alas, that things like these should ever be! Nevertheless, Mother Margaret, wishing to save her only child from bitter disappointment, and to secure for her your own dear forgiveness, told me all about these things and asked me to write to you concerning them.

Which I promised I would do.

Which I now have done.

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Will you not forgive that young lady who loves you so very well, and would ever be true to you hereafter? It is the earnest prayer of

Your friend,

MAGNOLIA BANYARD.

P.S.—May the Lord grant you mercy, love and peace.

Somehow, as John read this old letter over and over, he grew more and more suspicious of the words and motives of Miss Banyard. At length he murmured, "Jean! Jean! Jean!" rumbled his hair terribly, and began to pack a satchel.

As he started to get into his taxi, whom should he see walking toward him but Miss Scaligera Van Dusen? And she, having learned his destination, insisted that, inasmuch as John had plenty of time, they should ride to the station together, and the taxi driver be instructed to drive slowly. There was very, very much, she insisted, that she had to say to John concerning his cousin-in-law, Mr. Claud Tyrone. But she at once forgot all about that matter, fell to talking of the dative case, and, as John did not once interrupt her, she never thought of Claud Tyrone again. John was not sorry, for he believed she had merely wanted to tell him about some of Claud's innumerable escapades—matters of which John had had enough already and to spare. As John's train pulled out, he could see Scaligera, still standing in the midway like Abstraction's very self.

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When he arrived in Duluth, he learned from Miss Banyard that Mr. Proteus was in Seattle, and that Jean had gone to Milwaukee on business for Mr. Proteus. Mother Margaret he found at home, but in the hands and care of a strange neighbor. As sweet and gentle as before, she nevertheless seemed to be absent with her daughter. John asked about Jean, and it occurred to him to speak to Mother Margaret about Miss Banyard's letter. But when he tried to speak to her about that, his courage, as he thought of its contents, failed him. He might have asked the neighbor to withdraw for a time, but how could he even then have spoken to the mother of such matters as Miss Banyard had written him about? As Mother Margaret talked softly on, John appeared to catch, under the gentle seeming of her tones, a far-away, perhaps timid, rebuke—a faint suggestion of the mere shadow of a polite reproach.

John, therefore, in pain, soon left Morning Glory Cottage, and, with bowed head, walked along the snow-covered bluff. It was a gray, sad day. Out in the harbor, on the lead-colored Lake, sailed ice-boats—slowly careening, slowly righting, slowly careening once again, like melancholy spirits of the cold, gray winter, attempting to play. The gloriously colored and sublimely massive movements which he had observed over the three big bays in summer-time, were strangely, almost startlingly, absent.

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John stepped swiftly down the bluff-side. Common-place enough the view appeared to him now. Jean was not to return for three weeks, and he took the earliest train back home.

CHAPTER XIX

WHOSOEVER SMITETH THEE ON THY
RIGHT CHEEK—BE CAREFUL
ABOUT JEAN

CHAPTER XIX

WHOSOEVER SMITETH THEE ON THY RIGHT CHEEK—
BE CAREFUL ABOUT JEAN

AFTER a tub in his rooms at Granville, John went walking across the campus, intending to meet old Hoop-skirts. Hoops had fully decided to work for a Ph.D., later (strangely enough) to go into the ministry. Suddenly John saw Claud. No one in the University could have told what Claud was working for: he had been in the institution several years, and was still but a bachelor of hearts. He was coming directly toward John, and John stopped to receive him.

Claud had evidently been drinking hard. There was a little insolence in his manner, and much uncertainty in his gait. "Still working for the almighty dollar?" sneered he at John.

"No," laughed John. "I've got it working for me."

Claud appeared, then, to fall into another train of thought. His manner quickly changed. "Johnny, my dear," he coaxed, almost purred, "lend me a thousand dollars."

John said nothing, but slowly moved his head from side to side.

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"Curse you!" cried Claud. "It was *my* money made you. All you've got you owe to me."

"No," answered John. "You forget that all I had spent of our uncle's fortune when I turned the remainder over to you, I have since repaid you—in full and with good interest."

"You cheap skate, I hate you. You—you and I, we look a little alike. But down in our souls we are as different as wolf and snake."

John started to go.

Claud, seizing him by the shoulder, turned him about. John stood still, smiling, and ready, if any opportunity should offer, to give Claud the fairest possible words.

"I'm the wolf. You'll find that out. You're the snake." He struck John on the cheek a resounding blow.

John took out a handkerchief and began sopping up the blood. Then he looked all about the campus. Students were passing and repassing, but none appeared to have seen the blow delivered. So John kept the handkerchief up to his cheek, with its red spot turned toward the aching flesh, that none might know of his cousin's brutality.

"See! my dear cousin, you've shed my blood. But let us be friends nevertheless."

"Say, you whelp, you pup, you condemned dollar-chaser, if ever you go back to Duluth and go to

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calling on that La Croix woman again, I'll—what I'll do to you—I'll shed your blood *then*. Understand? I ain't used to talking to long ears, but I think you can get me just the same, you tail-turning coward. And I mean to get her too—get her the easiest way."

Something snapped then in John's head. A hot, surging tide rose and pressed tightly in his neck, in the back of his head, in his temples. There was a sound of drumming for a while. He actually thought it was beginning to rain.

"She's only everybody's dirty trollop anyhow. But I intend to have her for awhile. And *you* keep out of my way."

John maintained a cool, steady hand upon himself. He wanted to tell this man that he lied, to smash once and forevermore the mouth that had told an infamous falsehood on so fine and noble a woman as Jean La Croix. He remembered when he himself had doubted Jean, but that did not make him any more lenient toward Claud. He had been very young then. And if he, John, had ever come to doubt her, it was only because she had worn at her blessed throat the picture of this lewd rake, this wastrel, this night-by-night gambler and cold-blooded slanderer of good women. Three years before this day, John would have fought his cousin at once, fought him to an unquestionable finish. But, just now, he

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paused and reflected. All about the campus students were passing and repassing. Fight about Jean—dear little Jean back there in Duluth, *his* Jean—and publish her name to the world as something that two ruffians had snarled over, like dogs about a bone? Better keep cool, wait, let this matter wholly subside, and then, some day, when Claud perchance had forgotten all about it, pick a quarrel with him on some other subject, and then fight him, whip him thoroughly, about *that*. Later, he could tell the liar what it really had been that he had whipped him for. So Jean would be avenged, and yet her name kept spotless from the foul mouths of the world.

He turned slowly away.

Claud flung after him, "Coward! Thief! Stealer of women's hearts! You stole my uncle's money too! Dollar-chaser! You take boxing lessons daily, and what good do they do you? You're a coward. The Duke of Duluth, and afraid to go back to Duluth to see a beautiful woman, because I've told you not to!"

John actually turned to slap the loud mouth ere it could say more. But a heavy hand was laid on him. He looked round. Hoop-skirts!

Hoops led him away, and Claud staggered off, laughing, in the opposite direction—laughing, and looking back from time to time triumphantly.

"I'm now doing settlement work," explained Hoop-

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skirts. "*Don't* pay any attention to that cousin of yours. I came up just in time to save his life, so don't go to killing him now. And I've entered—I believe I told you—on a course for the Ph.D. I'll stay and work all summer. You—you come too, and tell 'em you want to be a philosopher."

But John could not quite convince himself that he wanted to be a philosopher.

From that day onward there was, over and over again, increasing trouble in John's laundry. Somebody threw sand or emery powder into the gears of the machines. Some one exploded a bomb in the boiling-room. One day some man, wearing a mask, had darted from a closet and thrown acid into the eyes of one of the girls from the University who was working for John. She was blinded for life. John made due provision for her, but he never could learn who it was that had done these evil things. He might suspect, but, so far, his most careful watchers had been able to fasten the blame on nobody.

There was something too that kept telling John that he himself was watched, constantly, eternally.

CHAPTER XX
SAID JIM TO JACK

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SAID JIM TO JACK

IT WAS not long after the explosion in the boiling-room when John missed his Bachelor's diploma. It had hung, ever since that red-letter day when good old President Brown "by virtue of the authority vested in me," etc., had placed it in John's trembling hands, in John's apartment, just over the wide, oaken mantel. His Master's diploma had never meant quite so much to him as this, the first he had ever received, so the second sheepskin had been placed in John's safety drawer at Mr. Von Bulow's bank. Before the grate fire in his living room John would sit for hours, sometimes looking into the flames and planning great things for his business, anon glancing up at the Bachelor's diploma, and reflecting on the pride which his father would have had in sitting beside him and looking at "these presents"—not "presents" at all, but the results of hard work. A few nights after the explosion in the laundry, some one, about midnight as John always believed, entered his room and carried away both the diploma and his father's old watch.

A week or two after that, John received this letter:

DEAR JOHN SMITH: I chanst to know whear your diplomy is. It is hear in Duluth. Likewise your father's watch.

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Next time you come to Duluth, phone me at Kwasind Hotel, and I'll talk you to them both and no charges.

Yours respect.

REDFIELD GEORGE.

The next train saw John headed for Duluth.

He arrived late in the afternoon, phoned the Kwasind Hotel, but found that Mr. George was out, and that he would not return till eight on the following morning. John asked the management to say to Mr. George in the morning that he, John, would be waiting for him at the Iron Range House as early as half past eight. Then John went off to the Arrowhead Building, and all for to see—Mr. Proteus.

His heart beat high at the thought of going about again in the city of a thousand noises, ten thousand ambitions. Here it all was again—Duluth! Duluth—just as of old, but larger and noisier and still more ambitious than ever. He felt all the young forces of the place, typical as they were of the forces of America, also the vast, the incomparable tasks which still they had before them.

In the hotel he had just left, a man, probably a drummer, had been singing in the room next to John's, a foolish bit of an old lakeshore song:

“Said Jim to Jack, ‘Now what’ll you take?
You seem to have come just off the Lake.’”

After a time, in a higher pitched voice:

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"Said Jack to Jim, 'Why whisky's mine,
Unless you got that Muscat wine
That old Paul Bunyan used to make
Whenever his friends come off the Lake.' "

The ridiculous, lilting words kept rushing through his mind, and, shortly, he began to hum them. They seemed somehow to express the spirit of youthful life and hilarity which appeared, on this particular joyous trip at least, to be the very essence of Duluth.

As he entered the Arrowhead Building and neared the elevator, he was actually singing:

"Said Jim to Jack, 'Now what'll you take?' "

He, on his part, took the elevator—which made him quite giddy enough—and, a moment later, he was standing in the waiting-room of Mr. Proteus.

Jean! Over in the corner, just as of yore, tap-tapping her typewriter.

The crass words died in his throat. As Jean had not seen him enter, he stood for some moments looking at her very steadily. Then she happened to look up. "O!"

She placed an involuntary hand over her heart, turned deathly pale, and at once reddened.

John affected not to see all this. He took a step or two toward her, and, not having a speech made up beforehand, could think only of these commonplace but relevant words: "Is Mr. Proteus in?"

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Mr. Proteus was in, it appeared, but busy. She, however, arose, and, walking up to John, gave him a cordial hand.

John's heart leaped. He tried to talk, stammered, finally said: "My name is John Smith."

Jean laughed, and put her hands up to each side of her face, as if she were trying to hide tell-tale flags.

"I like your name," said John.

"I'm glad," returned she, "that you like my name; but I like yours better." That was a very strange speech, but John did not appear to think it either ridiculous or unmaidenly. He merely beheld Jean in the glory of her looks and her youth. Never had he seen her quite so beautiful. Did he not love her terribly? And she, on her part, did she not as plainly love him? He would propose to Jean right now, here in the very room in which he first had met her.

"Jean—I—I love—"

No more words than these were out of his mouth when he caught the sound of shuffling footsteps at the outer door. A moment later the door swung open and Claud stood before them—Claud.

John and Jean were both thunderstruck by his expression. He was pale as the moon; his eyes stared; his mouth hung open like an imbecile's. For a moment, strangely enough, he was dumb.

He turned and looked behind him furtively, then,

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staggering forward, said: "I got the niftiest nerve in town. I— Ever see me put two needles' points together in front of me, arm's length? Got two— O Hades, I need— John, you haven't got a shot of whisky, have you? I'm sick, folks. I tell you I'm sick. I haven't any more sense than [he hesitated] than Andy Polano.

"Know Andy? Andy's fool. Remember Andy, Jean? Remember cave up there near you? Andy's little goose. Get killed, some day, keeping all that money he has right there in his store, so many bad people."

He paused, glaring all about, as if at spectres. John glanced at Jean, suddenly stared in amazement. Her arms were folded on her desk, her head in her arms. She was sobbing terribly. For a moment it was horrible. The hot blood of jealousy pounded in John's brain. It was for Claud that she was crying— Claud, who was drunk. A voice shouted in John's ears, "Kill him! The scoundrel—kill him!"

But John went to a window instead, and looked over the Lake. A vast liner was just setting out over that symbol of the Infinite. As he watched it for a long time, his wild heart grew more peaceful. Then it suddenly swelled with joy. Not for Claud had Jean been weeping, but for John's own rudely interrupted words.

A door opened. John ventured to look into the

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room. Mr. Proteus was entering from his office. Seeing Jean still sobbing at her desk, he stopped, straightened suddenly up, looked first at Claud then at John. "Ah, I see!" Claud he thereupon ignored, Jean's hair he lightly touched as he passed her. To John he extended a cordial hand. "A long, long time, my boy, since last we met. And now I cannot even have you out to dinner. I'm going to the Range in great haste, and I'll not be back till midnight. Come round at noon tomorrow. Million things to say to you." Then he suddenly took him into his office and told him one of them. He was not yet wholly satisfied about that will—which he had once again got possession of, after it had been filed. He was having a number of new handwriting experts investigate it. Then he ushered John back into the waiting-room, and looked about for Jean. But she was gone.

Claud, too, somehow, had disappeared.

John could not help wondering, under the circumstances, whether the two had gone away together. Even if they had, he would trust Jean. There might have been some perfectly valid reason why she should accompany a drunkard.

John left the building, dined like a ravenous lion, went back to his hotel room, and merely sat in a rocking-chair, looking out into the busy street. He would not speak with Jean again until the next day, when Claud would probably not be present. He

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felt that he *must* speak to her in the room in which he first had met her. How long he sat in the chair he never knew; but, after a time, he awoke in bed. As he lay there, so happy he could not sleep again, he heard once more the genial drummer's voice in the adjoining room:

"Said Jim to Jack, 'Now what'll you take?
You seem to have come just off the Lake.' "

It was good to be in Duluth, with all its strange local color.

Then came the part about Paul Bunyan. Yes, Jean did love him. By all the water in Lake Superior, there could be no more doubt about that, the most important fact in all this important world. It *was* good to be in Duluth.

CHAPTER XXI
MOUNT SERVICE UNDER THE STARS

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MOUNT SERVICE UNDER THE STARS

IN THE morning John was up before dawn. Having broken his fast at an all-night lunch-room, he decided to mount the bluff, there to watch the sun rise.

He chose Fifth Avenue West, and began to climb. As he passed the post office, he heard once more a great mellow "Lo-o-o!" Turning, he beheld in the starlight an immense freighter sliding past the foot of the Avenue along in the bay. From this point he could not see the Gate of the World.

On he went, past the soldiers' monument and along the east side of the court-house, and then, a few moments later, up and up and up the Golden Stair again. He was not able to observe that the stair, in spots, was decaying and somewhat out of alignment. Why, it was while he and Jean had been coming down that wonderful stair—ah! just about this very point—when Jean—when he first had come to understand that Jean cared for him.

He stopped and looked at the sky. No big clouds now, no fearfully threatening storm. Just beautiful stars! Stars and stars and myriads of stars, spread out in every direction over the silent, blue-black dome of God's night. And such a night! Wondrous

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clear, soft night just before morning! He had always had a special love, a feeling of unspeakable sublimity for night as it looked just before break of day. Such a night was, indeed, not a little like his own life just now. Ah yes! In a very short time—Jean! Jean who should prove to be the bright, the endless dawn for his soul—because, should they not, both he and Jean, after this happy, happy life on earth was over, live on and on, even happier still, in heaven? There would be nothing but dawn there, no passage of time whatever. Good old Momsie too, she should be there. Ah the stars and the stars and the stars! He was still a very young man.

Even when he had attained the crest of the bluff and was walking along it, he pondered for many moments on dust and destiny, forgetting even to look out over Duluth and its mighty harbor and so across to Wisconsin, and then, leftward, through the Gate of the World, and, farther and farther, across that placid symbol of eternity, the great Lake.

He began to remember that this was the place—this very portion of the bluff on which he walked now—wherealong he had dreamed of seeing the University of Duluth rise, that institution the marble whiteness of whose buildings, on this exalted position, should shine down the water, sending its visible messages of intellectual—in addition to that other message from the lower city, the commercial—super-

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service to the world. Granville should be added unto Duluth!

How had the intellectual growth of America been chiefly the result of its increase in industry and business! Industry and business indeed had made possible all the schools and colleges. On business and on industry, in fact, the whole world's intellectual achievements had been, and forever must be, based. What a picture for a future day! Yonder, down about the water—industry and world-wide trade. Here, high upon the acropolis—a mighty seat of learning. Should God give him the strength, the riches, the influence, he himself would establish here, some time, here upon this Inspiration Point, the University of Duluth. Over the portal of its chief building, he would inscribe, in letters of brightest gold, the words of Jean—SERVICE AND SUPERSERVICE TO HUMANITY.

In his flaming, youthful heart, all things seemed quite possible. He prayed, "God bless Duluth!"

A faint, far cry awoke, miles and miles distant, over on the Wisconsin shore—a tiny spectre of wistful sound, the voice perhaps of either a coming or a departing freight train, or, as it might be, the ghostly echo of some early ship. John, smiling, added: "Yes, you too, Superior!"

He moved toward Morning Glory Cottage, stopped in front of Andy Polano's cave. The cave seemed

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vacant now, yet full, nevertheless, of strange portents. Jean's little house was clearly etched in the calm starlight, somewhat dark, but shining too as the beacon, the bright, infallible guide-to-be of all his life. Her home! Jean's house! All round him he felt the presence of his beloved. An immense happiness filled his soul.

The place became intolerably sweet, as he kept looking at it, and he walked off east again. "Dear old Uncle John," he mused, "I should have to love you dearly, if for nothing else, at least for this, that you brought me to Duluth." He seemed to inhale, up here in the silence, among the stars, looking off over the incomparable scene of superservice, the spirit of the place. This was a spot wherefrom to gaze out into the world of helpfulness in material things, yet whereon, at the very same moment, to preserve inviolate the inner sanctuary of the soul. O God, O God!

Then the sun began to rise. John had forgotten all about the dawn, forgotten that he had come up here more to see that than for anything else—to witness with glorified heart the ineffable bright ceremony wherewith the Lord of created things ushereth in yet another miracle of miracles, that bit of eternity which men call a day.

And he heard (as the intolerable rapture of the heavenly change came on) through the great aisles

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of the rapidly paling stars, a voice, as it were the voice of an archangel, and surpassing sweet, so that his soul fell prostrate. And the voice cried, "When it shall be God's will, then that night which is the material creation, it too shall pass away. Cometh then the morning which shall endure forever. Meanwhile, work ye, work ye! He best serveth God who serveth best God's sons and daughters."

A long "Lo-o-o!" came rolling, reverberating up the house-built bluff. In the strengthening light, another vast steamer was pushing through the Gate of the World. "Lo! what I bring you, World! Lo! Lo!"

A rumble and a crash near by! John looked up. He had approached, almost without knowing it, very close to the topmost station of the Incline Railway.

CHAPTER XXII

ANDY MAKES A GOOD, FAT BARGAIN

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ANDY MAKES A GOOD, FAT BARGAIN

WHEN, walking down, John had reached the business district of the city, and was just on the point of crossing an alley, who, forsooth, should come forth out of the alley's mouth but Claud? John stopped and stared at him in astonishment. Claud was not, as a rule, an early riser.

"Hello, Christ!" greeted Claud. "Been up on the bluff, God Almighty, looking out over the whole world and receiving temptations from the Devil?"

Now John's heart was particularly tender and sweet toward all mankind, and for good reason. So he said, "Cousin dear, I *have* been up on the bluff, and my soul has been opened to God's great love toward men."

"Why, you old contemptible dollar-chaser, you don't mean God's love, you mean the love of kale and the love of women—Sister Brighteyes and all that. Well, I tell you one thing certain, my dear would-be scholar but dabbler in peoples' dirty linen: Sister Brighteyes now belongs to me. We left old Proteus' office yesterday together, and, before we'd gone a block, she'd promised herself to me."

John wanted to tell the fellow that, from the

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bottom of his black heart to his half-intoxicated and foolishly mumbling lips, he lied. But, once again, as on that day of their quarrel in Granville, he decided he would not fuss about Jean. Jean's name must, at all events, be kept out of the rabble's tales.

But Claud was talking on. "So you may now just as well go back on your bluff, dollar-chaser. Up there you can see a lot of dirty elevators, a lot of dirty ore-docks and coal-docks, a lot of dirty lumber yards, dirty ships' wharves, dirty ship-building plants, dirty railroad tracks, and all the rest of the dirty, contemptible business. Suit you? Of course, you dirty tradesman. The dirty Duke of Duluth! And his coat-of-arms, it's a dirty Peavey elevator against a background of dirty, sewage-filled Lake. No you don't. You don't go on: you listen to me."

Claud grasped him by the lapels of his coat. "No, you don't, you hypocritical dollar-snatcher, you parrot of a student, you—"

He whirled John round, trying to kick him. "Get back up there on the bluff, and look out over your dirty business scene again. Get!"

Then occurred a thing unexpected. Claud, in his rantings, had always counted on his cousin's peaceful disposition and self-control; but, as can happen in the case of even the meekest man on earth, he had this time counted too far.

John stepped swiftly into the alley, turned and

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said, his face (as he felt) all drawn and white: "You have just now maligned one of the finest pictures that God and man have jointly created. I will not permit this to remain unpunished, but mean to whip you till you apologize."

Just then a steamer, passing out through the Gate of the World, boomed: "Lo! Lo what I bring you!" John heard it and smiled. He came near replying, "Yes, ship, and I wish that the soul of you might now be here to see what I too shall bring—not to the world, but to one of the traducers of that which serves the world and serves it mightily."

As Claud continued to hesitate about entering the alley, John issued a still more undeclinable invitation. "Cad! Kicker of men you do not expect to fight! Drunkard and gambler and waster of the work of others! Liar on the works of God and man! Come and let's settle accounts; quickly too, for of all the 'dirty' business I have to transact this day, this is the dirtiest, and I want it over."

Now Claud's plans for the day (of all the days of *his* entire life!) had certainly not contemplated a physical conflict with the man who stood before him. Any man but this, or any other day than this! He hesitated, started to turn. Then, urged by sudden anger, he rushed into the alley and began raining blows at John.

John was not taken by surprise. He was, however,

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forced to yield ground again and yet again—ducking, side-stepping, ducking still more. It would not do to let his rival even give him severe punishment in return for severe punishment. This one time, this one fight—it must end forever the question of supremacy and in the only way that Claud could understand.

An opening presented itself: John led with fearful violence. But the opening proved a trap. Claud, like a professional pugilist, evaded, and John struck his fist against an adjoining brick wall. Score one for Claud!

But John noticed that Claud was breathing heavily. He therefore decided to keep the battle going till Claud's breath should give completely out. Then he could vanquish him. He that had led the cleaner life should possess the greater endurance and should win. By all the muscles of Hercules! His left fist was swelling, but that should make no difference.

Claud, on his part, seeing that his endurance was about to fail, endeavored to force the issue. First one trick, then another. But John had boxed with Hoop-skirts night after night for years, knew all the tricks like an open book. Not again should Claud induce him to be careless.

Trick after trick, and still no point for Claud.

Claud, breathing like a spent race-horse, put one hand to his side. "Worst trick of all," thought John.

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Then he suddenly saw that Claud was actually outwinded and that now was the right time. He stepped near, got a feeble lead, countered on the side of the neck, gave three quick punches to the point of the jaw, and expected his cousin to fall to the ground.

But Claud, though dazed, barely tottered, and all at once his arms were tight about John's body.

"A clinch, eh!" cried John. "Better for me than for you, for I am much the stronger, though the shorter-armed." Yet he did not easily throw Claud. In fact, Claud, slipping his hold, suddenly took a grip on John's throat—a powerful, paralyzing, strangling, intentionally murderous clutch. John thought that his days were numbered, but, meeting foul with foul, he struck the inner edge of his little right hand squarely across Claud's larynx. Claud relaxed. John then tore the strangle-hand loose, punched hard straight up against Claud's chin, saw his purplish face jerk back, and, one brief second later, had Claud on the ground and was lying across him.

Claud, however, had again fastened a considerable grip upon him, so that, even now, John could twist and turn only with difficulty. But when he had got where he looked straight down into Claud's face, he felt all at once a strange and sickening repugnance to the sight which he saw.

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Like the fact or not, the face beneath him seemed to be now his very own. For a moment he might have been taken advantage of, had Claud recognized his condition.

But Claud lay, face upturned, his sad, weary eyes staring skyward, only slightly conscious that his fight was lost. John had meant, when he had cast this unfair fighter to the ground, to strike him in his slanderous mouth just one good, forever-settling blow. But, as he kept gazing, he forgot to strike. More and more he came to the belief that the countenance under him, although not in the least of kin to his own, as kinship is generally reckoned, might nevertheless, but for its criminal hardness, have been that of himself. More and more he saw that the features, now bruised and swollen and altogether at John's mercy, might, but for some strange accident in life, have made up the visage of him, John. Once, in fact, after a— Ah yes, it was after that banquet which Claud had planned. John, awakening in the palatial dining-room of his Luxembourg House, and looking into a mirror, had beheld precisely that same swollen, that same vapid, weary and dissolute set of lineaments. A feeling came upon him that, in precisely Claud's conditions of existence, he, John Smith himself, might, in very deed and in truth, have become just such a man as this that lay beneath him drunken and vanquished in the dust. In his early

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days at Granville had he not really been headed in Claud's own way? Well, we are all blood-cousins, in fact, or (more like it) brothers, even other selves. Hence the strange resemblances, now and then, perceived between people who are said to be absolutely unrelated. After the innumerable crossings of strains in the human family, it is really astonishing that so very many people are *unlike*. And then John began to fancy, as he rested on the prostrate body of the dissolute man, that the repulsive person beneath him was, in reality, just his baser self, his "Mr. Hyde," the viler and more vicious part of his being, which, somehow, during the late fearful combat, he had torn out of his body, had vanquished, and then sat upon.

He thought he would try to restore at least a semblance of amity between Claud and himself. "You were an immovable body, Claud," he smiled, "but I was an irresistible force."

Claud slowly opened his eyes and gave John a look of detestation and hate, uttering not a word.

An expression of John's boyhood days suddenly came back to him. "Surrender?" he asked, jocularly.

"No—you—" (Claud was still breathing heavily) "dirty—double dirty—accursed laundryman."

But still John could not hammer the face which might, so easily, have been his own. "Get up," he commanded, himself arising.

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Claud slowly arose, dusted his clothing with his cap, stretched out his long legs once or twice to determine whether the bones were still working as units, and then, turning his not overly erect spine toward John, sauntered out of the alley.

"That's one thing, my dear," thought John, "that you did *not* get in the easiest way."

He watched his cousin across the street, saw him moving in a straight line with the alley, and then began to marvel at something which he had not noted until now. Claud was dressed in a suit almost exactly like his own. Even the cap was like John's. Claud, heretofore, had always tried to apparel himself as differently as possible from John, or so John had believed. Strange that, all of a sudden, he should thus appear in quiet, almost quaker-like, gray. Probably just an accident, John finally concluded.

Claud he saw go straight on, after crossing the street, into the continuation of the same alley in which the two had fought and in which John still stood. Soon Claud was out of sight, and John, dusting his own clothes with his cap and handkerchief, went out into the street, intending to proceed immediately to his hotel for a wash-up and change of attire.

"Now, my pretty, this is a pleasure an' a 'elp." The voice came from a stout, flashy figure with a fishy eye. Red George!

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"I was to meet you at your 'otel," went on George. "But seein' that time went by an' you never walks in, thought I'd just set hout a w'ile. 'Ow *air* you, Mr. Smith? 'Oly cat! you're all bruised up. Been fightin'? Naughty, but not to be 'elped."

John ignored the question. "Let's get that diploma, George, the diploma and the watch."

"Yes; built jest like me, blime if yer ain't. Same back an' chest. Same wayst. Little 'ands but 'ard.—Yes, yes; I'll take you there: you shall 'ave 'em, Jawn. I could make a fighter outa yer, blime if I couldn't. But that man 'Oop-skirts, that you always—

"Blime me, I nearly forgot. Friend o' yours too, Mr. Smith, ain't 'e? Ol' 'Oops, 'e is dead."

"Dead! Hoops dead?" John leaned suddenly against the near-by wall. "Why! You surely don't mean— You—you don't intend to say that Hoop-skirts, *my* old Hoops—he's—that he's—"

"Dead," nodded George. "Dead as the *hinside* of a graveyard."

"Why, how did he die?"

"In settlement work 'e was. One day, down in the Sob Stuff Hinn, somebody took 'is purse—that purse that was always, as I might say, open to the needy. Ol' 'Oops, like 'is true self, he starts off after 'im. Then a confederate, he arises from a neighboring tyble, and—boom! Your 'Oop-skirts is no more."

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"Do they know who— The assassins— Do they know who did it?"

"Do they know? Same's I know you. But they ain't been no arrests made. What with the Governor's friendship an' protection, an' the fact that punishment ain't punishment any more, these days, they ain't even bothered, nobody has, to arrest 'im. Maybe they don't dare. Maybe, anyway, it ain't no use. Tax payers' money poured out. Big trial. No conviction. Or say they *is* a conviction, what then? In the pen—a little labor, lots o' music, motion pictures, books an' *booquets*, soothin' words from visitors. Then back to life an' liberty on parole. Then— You know 'ow it is, Mr. Smith. I always says, I says as 'ow if *I'd* been punished severe for my own first offense, an' been given to understand that *hadequate* punishment for each and every offense from that time on would be *hinevitable* an' death be always 'anded out for any death I might commit— I always says that, in *them* circumstances, I, for one, would 'ave led a respectable life. What I am— Look at me! Sot, thief, murderer! It's all their fault—the silly sentimentalists. 'Arden me, is it?"

George took out his watch and stood calculating. "We're a bit hearly, I think," he said. "Suppose we go more slow.—I'm as 'ard already, as 'ard can be. I always 'ave been."

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John was seized by a sudden suspicion. "Look here, Redfield," he angrily cried, "if this is a put up job—"

"It ain't no put up job, Jawn. 'Ow—tell me 'ow—hanybody could put up a job on *you*, an' hit broad daylight. Blast me heye, but you're the suspicious one."

"What is the game?" persisted John.

"W'y, the t'ief he takes no chances. So 'e comes to Doolooth wit' de swag, an' finds 'is fence 'ere. 'E got 'is money from de fence. De fence 'e expects to git 'is money from you, right now."

"And you?"

"I—O I expect—a little—compensation from *you*, Jawn. Say, can't you give me a check, just a check, for ten? Can't you? Needn't bother about cash."

"No, but I've a ten dollar bill." John had visions of what George might do with a check. Precisely why should this compound of all earth's lewdness, dishonesty and violence want his, John Smith's check in preference to cash? To get his signature, no doubt, and then to forge a large sum above it. Or was it to secure some kind of apparently damning evidence against him? Or was it for still some other ulterior and most detestable purpose? He came near giving up altogether the plan to recover his diploma and watch. Then, remembering that universities do not re-issue diplomas, moreover that his father's

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watch was likewise irreplaceable, he took out his purse, gave George a ten-dollar bill, and moved on with him up the street.

At the next corner George stopped and told a facetious story, not unmixed with filth. This done, he gave John a more detailed account of the sudden death of their mutual friend, Hoop-skirts. At last, looking at his watch once more, George urged: "Come on; let's go, or we may be too late."

"Too late?" asked John in amazement. "Why, how could we be too late?" About ten seconds afterwards, they were standing before the shop door of Andy Polano.

"This is the place," said Red George. "They're both in there."

"You mean to say that my diploma and watch are in the hands of Andy Polano?"

"You 'it the nail right on the thumb," laughed George. Looking at his watch again, "It's now ten p.x.; you can go on in, an' I can go on away. Andy 'e ain't just 'eart an' soul in love with me, so I can go on away. I 'ad intended to go in with you. But you're so blyme suspicious."

John grabbed the man by his wrists. "Look here, George!" he exclaimed. "I know your sort. There's something wrong here, though I can't see what it is. Why didn't you, in your letter, just tell me that the watch and diploma were at Andy Polano's? Or why,

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at least, not have told me when I just now met you, that they were here? Why did you insist on coming here with me, and then, delaying on the way, seek to arrive here at a certain time?"

"Well, well! If his Grace ain't hangry! Now that's the way, I do shrewdly suspect, with *hall* the true nobility. 'W'y?' do you say? 'W'y?' W'y didn't I let you come 'ere all by your little self? First place, your Wealthiness. I wanted that ten dollars."

"You got that long ago," countered John, "and yet you kept on walking beside me, and, under one pretense or another, killing time."

"Well, ef it ain't the most suspicious soul by 'arf what ever I see. Andy, 'e says to me, 'ten;' and I says, 'I always keeps all app'intments.' But w'y didn't you want me to come with you? Nobility again. No 'arm in that, your Grace. No 'arm, none, I do hassure you. Ain't ashamed, be you, to walk down Winter 'ill Havenue with Red George? Why, *this* hain't such an haristocratic street. W'y be ashamed? You knocked me hout, it's true, at your Grace's banquet in the Luxembourg 'ouse when your Grace was spendin' hother peoples' money. But w'y be proud about hit *now*, w'en you're a-spendin' of your own? Your cousin Claud, 'e's a Simon pure gentleman, an' yet 'e ain't ashamed o' old George's company."

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George gave a little easy wrench of his wrists and was gone. He knew all the tricks of escape and hiding.

John looked stupidly about, wondering just what he ought to do. The fact that his stolen articles had been brought here and sold to old Andy was simple enough to explain. Andy was a notorious "fence" for thieves, and the criminal, whoever he was, especially if he had had more plunder than John's to dispose of, might well enough have preferred to "unload" them at a considerable distance from the city in which he had stolen them. Nevertheless, George had acted in a very suspicious manner. Why had he been so anxious to arrive at Andy's at a certain time? That point kept troubling John. Andy was always at home, except in thunder-storms, when he went up on the bluff. And the sky just now was as clear and blue as a piece of polished blue marble. Then, too, George's mention of the great humiliation which John had inflicted on him at the Luxembourg banquet—there before a large body of wealthy young gentlemen in whose dissolute eyes he would gladly have shone—this made John feel that perhaps the hardened old criminal had set a trap for him, and now, just at the moment when John was about to step into the snare, had taken a deep if somewhat risky pleasure in adverting to the motive which had prompted the trap's setting. The mention of

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Claud's name, too, had thrown a chill into John. He was well aware that Claud had, lately, spent an increasing amount of time in the criminal districts of Granville, especially in the Sob Stuff Inn. Plenty of contact, then, between Claud and Red George. And Claud too, he felt very sure, was not in the least above joining a criminal like George in a stratagem against him, John. Finally, he recalled how, after his cousin's recent defeat at John's hands, this very day, Claud had set off down the alley which, some blocks away, would take him along one side of old Andy's shop.

John turned to the glazed door, and looked within. At first he saw nothing, but, as his eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, he beheld again the curious contents of the shop—the files and files of second-hand clothes; the show-case full of revolvers, electric batteries, knuckle-dusters, black-jacks, and what not. At length, there, hanging on the wall to the left, he espied a diploma. He could not quite make out the lettering on it, but he had no doubt that George, in saying that his watch and diploma were in this place, had uttered the truth. After all, what harm could come from simply going into Andy's store and talking about the stolen articles. Andy, no doubt, intended to ask him for his own property an extortionate price, whereby George and Claud would, in a somewhat simple and childlike manner, be able to see

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themselves revenged. That was, he became more and more convinced as he kept on thinking, the sum and substance of the trap. Such a trap would not hurt him a great deal: he had plenty of money.

Then a sudden inspiration. The reason why George had wanted John to arrive at Andy's at a certain hour was that Claud had arranged with George to lure John into the place at a time when Claud would be there ready to attack him—perhaps unfairly. Old Andy, of course, could be bought to give any sort or kind of testimony, should Claud, afterwards, need a witness—the more especially as Andy did not like John anyway. This, no doubt, had been the plan. But Claud had already had, John thought, and with full reason, a sufficiency of personal encounter for one day. It had, no doubt, been a part of the plan for George to enter the shop with John, and then to assist Claud, perhaps from behind, in beating John up. But George, finding John persistently suspicious of him, had decided to leave the beating up entirely to Claud's hands. The whole matter had, therefore, fallen through.

All the tiniest phases and aspects of this entire course of thought, as well as all, even the minutest, details of what took place in the next half hour or so, remained, through after time, engraved in John's memory like sins in the book of the recording angel. Again and again, in the years to be, he would turn

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them all about, over and over, and yet over and over again, pondering each unalterable detail and aspect completely. Then over and over, and over and over again, as a madman tosses a ball about within some padded chamber.

John pressed the latch and went in. Then he turned, pushed the door to, and latched it again.

All of a sudden he glimpsed Andy's two vulture-like eyes intently upon him. How John had failed to discern Andy from the street as he had viewed the interior of the shop through the glass in the upper portion of the door, he could not quite make out. There, at all events, sat the old Jew on the same high chair, apparently, as on that day when John had first come into the shop to sell him the cast-off Iowa clothing. There he perched, parrot-like, in his shining black suit, with his tense, yellow skin, his thin, high, aquiline nose; his eyes that kept gleaming in suppressed madness. John thought of Andy's storm-cave, and of the way in which the demented old man would enter it, and, throughout a long-drawn storm, shout fierce defiance and mockery to the spirits raging wildly over Gitchee Gumee.

"Good morning."

"*Goot* morning."

"I hear you have my diploma."

Andy pointed to the wall. .

"And my father's old watch."

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Andy pointed to the show-case.

John strolled (in no too big a hurry, and maintaining a cautious side view of the crazy man) over to the show-case. There he saw his watch. No mistake about that watch. Then he glanced up at the diploma—JOHN GRIDLEY SMITH on it, just above the midst of the lettering. His watch and his diploma, both past all doubt.

"How much do you want to rob me for them?"

"Koot Kot, I don't want to rop you. Hundert tollar. I *pay* hundert tollar. I merely keep dem t'ings till de proper owner come. Nothing—I ask nothing for myself. Simply nothing I ask for myself."

"Too much." John spoke with firmness. "That's my watch, my diploma. They were stolen from my room. I can go into court and get them both back, and not pay you a cent."

"That'll cost you *more* as ninety tollar."

"O it's *ninety* dollars this time?"

"I set 'ninety.' "

John reflected again that diplomas were never re-issued, also that fathers' watches could never be re-inherited. "Look here," he cried, "I'll give you fifty dollars for both the watch and the diploma, and no questions asked."

"I'll see what my fadduh says. I'll choost pray to my fadduh."

The old man, bowing his face in his hands, mut-

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tered gibberish. After a few seconds he lifted his head with a bright, triumphant air, and cried: "Yes, yes! My fadduh say I can do it: I could take feefty tollar."

The old man rose, went and got John the watch. John put the watch in his lower left-hand vest pocket. The old man, at this stage of the deal, insisted on having the whole of his pay. John paid. Andy took down and wrapped up the diploma.

John set the diploma under his arm, exchanged with Andy one or two semi-courteous remarks by way of parting, went to the door, unlatched it, and went out. Then he drew the door to, and once more heard the click of the latch. All these things he was destined to remember even to his dying day.

All at once he heard somebody in the room adjoining the store-room in which he had just been dickering, stumble and fall. For a moment he paused with a little shock of alarm about his heart. Then, suspecting that his no doubt altogether unfounded suspicion about Red George and his cousin had made him unduly nervous, also that he was still unstrung from the fearful battle in which he had recently engaged with Claud, he started to go on.

But once again his excited ear caught, even above the city uproar, a peculiar vocalization—a kind of thin, piteous cry, or wail, of angry but unavailing protest against somebody or something that seemed

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to be absolutely inexorable. Shocked still more and wondering just a little at his lack of steadiness, John returned to the door, unlatched it, and peered in.

Nobody present.

He called, "Andy!"

Nobody answered. He started to enter the room, but, hearing what he supposed to be Andy's normal footsteps, and reflecting that he really had no valid excuse to offer for returning into the room, he drew his head out through the doorway, closed the door once again, and, this time, though still with an odd impression that all was not quite as it should be, started rapidly down Winter Hill Avenue.

From time to time, in spite of himself, he would glance back over his shoulder at Andy's shop. All at once, on the opposite side of the street, he glimpsed Red George—skulking. He shouted to George, spite of a feeling that it was foolish to make the demand: "What are you doing there?"

George darted into an alley.

CHAPTER XXIII

MR. PROTEUS DREAMS ABOUT JEAN, AND
JEAN ABOUT THE INDIANS

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MR. PROTEUS DREAMS ABOUT JEAN, AND JEAN ABOUT THE INDIANS

BEFORE John, incited by the letter from Red George, had returned to Duluth, Jean had made fast progress on her steering-device. At last she had got her model complete. And it worked. At least in a large tank which she had built with her own hands in the basement of Morning Glory Cottage, it worked. But the question next arose, Would it work on the Lake, and, in particular, would it work in heavy seas?

At this critical stage she appealed to her old friend and benefactor, Mr. Proteus, for suggestions.

Yes, Mr. Proteus could offer at least one idea. Miss Henrietta Tyrone, Claud Tyrone's sister, had an electric launch. Claud often used it and claimed it, but Henrietta really owned it. Mr. Proteus would speak to Henrietta and get her, if he could, to allow Jean to test her steering-apparatus in it.

"But," objected Jean, "Claud would always want to go along when I wanted to use it, and, you see, I—I want to keep this invention secret—at least until I get it patented. Then—there are other reasons."

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Mr. Proteus pondered a little.

After a time he said, "Well, I'll tell you what I'll do. It's coming warmer weather now, and a little ride occasionally on the Lake, would do me no harm. I'll go along whenever you take the launch out. Perhaps I can even help you with your experiments. You can trust me? Yes. And you really need somebody to run the engine while you steer."

In a word, Mr. Proteus bought the launch. But, for the present, he did not tell Jean so. Neither did he nor Henrietta tell Claud so. The plan was to keep the actual ownership from Jean's knowledge. To tell Claud would have been to tell Jean. And Jean would have been seriously offended had she known that Mr. Proteus had spent money for her. Mr. Proteus, on his part, knew that, when Jean had finished her experiment, he could easily re-sell the launch. With his usual eye to business, he had bought the boat at a bargain.

When the ice went out of the bay, he and Jean, of starry or moonlit nights, went out upon the water, sometimes very far out, going and returning by the Gate of the World.

Once Claud came down to the boat-house, and insisted on becoming a member of the party. Gently refused admission to the boat, he made veiled insinuations, although apparently jocular, about people who could not have third parties along when they

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went out on the water. He bent down over the boat, beginning to examine the steering-apparatus.

"Don't do that!" cried Jean, a little sharply.

"Why not, Sister Bright-Eyes? Do you think I'd break the doofunny? I know a little about boats myself. I've run this same old tub clean up to Whitefish Point and back, and never a soul with me. Rough weather sometimes too. But you've got a new steering-device here. I just want to see it. Ah! What? Your own devising? Now I like the look of that doodingus. Good-bye."

He stood and kept watch upon them.

"That man means mischief," whispered Jean, when she and Mr. Proteus had got out of Claud's hearing. "Or perhaps I'm only too nervous about what, in any case—"

"About what, in any case, is a very successful and valuable invention?" completed Mr. Proteus. "Not at all. He's a bad man, Claud Tyrone. I put nothing beyond him. Once—"

But he turned and looked back at the shore. Jean looked too. Claud was still watching them, hands on hips, head craned forward, as if he might have been some evil bird of prey, looking hungrily after them. All at once they saw him take out a pair of binoculars and gaze after them through that.

"I wonder," reflected Mr. Proteus, "if I didn't let him see too much. He's quick, too quick, to see

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things, things that do not concern him. Let us not go far tonight. And, hereafter, if you have a neighbor you can trust, or one that doesn't and cannot understand any sort or kind of steering-device, arrange to have her come with us. Else, our fine friend, Mr. Tyrone, will be using a shameful tongue to some effect against us."

"I don't fear that so much," answered Jean, who, strong in her innocence, dreaded not the world's lips. "I only fear that Claud may have perceived the fundamental principle of this device. At all events, after a few more trials at quick side-turns in the trough of the sea, let us go back."

A few more turns, one or two suggestions for slight improvements, made by Jean herself, and she headed the launch for shore again.

Claud was still standing where they had left him. He came courteously to help them out of the boat.

Then he tried to inspect the steering-device once more. But Mr. Proteus, taking him by the shoulder, led him off to one side, and began to ask questions about the way to Whitefish Point. Under cover of this, Jean got her steering-device detached, boxed and locked up. The box made a kind of satchel-shaped affair which she carried in one hand.

That night, rather late, Mr. Claud Tyrone called on Mr. Proteus and remained with him for two hours. He might indeed have remained much longer, but

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Mr. Proteus, at last, when his patience had been completely worn out, gave that young gentleman to understand that even bachelor lawyers have regular times for retiring, and that they must, if they expected to be clear-headed next morning, go to bed a little before dawn.

Claud took the hint laughingly and left. Mr. Proteus, in bed, pondered and pondered over the meaning of the unasked call. "Trying to establish an alibi," mused the old lawyer, "but, now, for what purpose?" He remembered that three or four toughs had been moving around on the water front, when he and Jean had got back to the shore. For a moment he felt a quick spasm of fear for Jean. But then, at once reflecting that, had harm come to Jean, on her way back to Morning Glory Cottage, he would certainly have been notified by now, he turned over and went to sleep.

He had hardly closed his eyes, however, when he had a most frightful dream. He dreamed, first of all, and pleasantly enough, that Jean was really his daughter, and that he was wishing John to marry her, so that, in this way, John might become his son. John was to study law in his office, and be ready for the mantle to fall upon him, in place of the defunct Mr. Mulkins, when he, Mr. Proteus, should be able to work no more. So far, so good. But a black spirit of awful proportions and Satanic countenance, had

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come up out of the Lake, and tried to throttle Jean. Its enormous hands had closed about her neck, and John and Mr. Proteus had beaten at its ribs and clutched at its hands ineffectually. Then John had drawn a knife, and thrust it into the spirit's side. Whereupon dozens of similar spirits had sprung out of the wound, likewise from behind neighboring trees and rocks—the combat appeared to have taken place upon some unbuilt portion of the bluff—and then—then—Mr. Proteus had awakened with a strong sulphurous stench from the spirits still sickening his nostrils. He got up and dressed

Jean, meanwhile, had returned to Morning Glory Cottage in rather a pleasant frame of mind. Her invention was, mechanically at least, an assured success. Then too, as she thought the matter over, she became thoroughly convinced that Claud could not have learned the slightest thing about it. And she very well knew that, in case she should ever need financial assistance in the marketing of the invention, Mr. Proteus would stand behind her like a stone wall.

“After all these years!” she crooned joyously to herself. “Dear old Mother Margaret, how delighted she will be, not merely for the greatly increased supply of creature comforts to herself—of that she will take no very great account—but for me, for my glory. How much all that will mean to her.”

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As Jean entered the house, Mother Margaret at once remarked the glow of success on her face. "You have won, child!"

"I *have* won, Mother." She took the satchel-like box upstairs and bestowed it in its regular hiding-place, then returned to the living-room, and caressed her mother most tenderly.

Mother Margaret was very wakeful after that, and Jean could not bear to leave her until she had got her into a sound sleep.

It was well after midnight, Jean afterwards believed, when this occurred, and when she slipped up the stair, giving a backward glance or two at the soundly slumbering Mother Margaret.

Jean, when she entered her bedroom, went first of all to its front window, and gently let the curtain up. The moon had arisen, and, across the Lake—as it seemed, out of heaven's very self—ran a great path of glory—to the shore, to the bluff, yes upward, even upward over the very bluff and so to the door of her cottage. For the bluff, by the path which the light had taken, was mantled with the short grass of spring, and this, being covered with dew, had also turned to golden splendor like the waters of the Lake.

Came into Jean's mind the old days of the Indians once more. There, over the bay, in the darkness, even now slipped a birch bark canoe. There another. There another still. Then, all at once, like so many

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quickly moving bars of black, they rushed across that streak of glory on the water, and so into obscurity again.

Even here upon the glory-path that ascended the steep bluff, black forms were moving. There was a very near one—how stealthily it moved! There another. There another still.

All at once she became aware that stealthy forms were actually prowling about. For a block or two directly in front of the cottage there were no buildings, only grass, while, at the sides of the strip, here and there, stood shapeless masses of rock, which, in the moonlight, looked like concentrated shadows.

There went a figure again—no doubt of that. It gave a little sign with its hand. Another form came out of obscurity, and the two shades, for a moment, seemed conferring together.

The figures, after a little, advanced straight up the band of bright light toward the cottage. Then they stopped, bowed heads, conferred again, again disappeared behind a boulder.

Jean watched and watched, but, seeing no more moving forms, undressed and got into bed. She, however, left the curtain up, so that, if anything should happen in the night, she could quickly gaze out into the street, across it, and so, down the bluff-side, to the business part of the city, to the shore, to the water. Just how this great, wide view

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might have helped her, she could not have told; but she felt much safer with the curtain up.

All at once she awoke. The day had been a strenuous one, and fatigue had claimed her sooner than she had intended. Every sense and every faculty in her frame seemed, for some reason, to be supernaturally alert.

CHAPTER XXIV
BACK DOOR CALLERS

CHAPTER XXIV

BACK DOOR CALLERS

ALL at once she began to notice a curtain in the inward part of her room. This curtain hung in front of an alcove the upper part of which was filled with shelves, and in the lower part of which, during the earlier stages of her invention, she had kept the little model of her steering-apparatus together with some of her material and tools. A man could easily have hidden in that lower space. She believed that, by the moonlight filling the room, she could see that a part of the curtain was being grasped, or somehow tucked up—as if in a human hand.

She tried to convince herself that all this was the result of nervousness—of a rudderless imagination which had been too greatly excited by the unusual events of this, her finally successful, day. Still, there would keep coming into her mind the picture of Claud attempting to inspect her device, also the image of certain rough-looking men who, as she and Mr. Proteus had returned to shore, had kept hanging around and casting in their direction far too interested glances. Nonsense! Claud was not a fool to break into houses where he might easily be recognized. And the tough-looking men—simply hoboës looking for jobs or hand-outs.

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She turned and tried her customary sleeping positions. But the pictures of the day would not leave her. She got up and pulled aside the curtain: there was no one in the alcove. She went back to bed.

She wondered where John was now, dear old wonderful John. And was he still thinking her a bad one? And would he ever return to Duluth? And, should he come—

It seemed so long ago, ages ago, since she had seen John. She wondered—

She again listened intently. There had appeared to be some unusual sound at the back door of the cottage. Again she heard it, this time very distinctly.

She arose and went into the rear bedroom, and stood looking out into the yard. All around the house and in the great, mysterious out-of-doors, she heard the little, strange voices of the night—those tiny crepitations and susurrations which cannot easily be accounted for.

All at once a great “Lo-o-o!” arose from the Lake, and floated over the hill. At the same moment a man slipped from behind a shapeless block of trap-rock which was even larger than the cottage, glided to the door, and began softly tinkering at the lock. The ship kept lo-ing, and the man kept tinkering.

Jean stepped back into her own bedroom, in which, on her mother's account, she had installed, some

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years before, a telephone extension from the room below. But, lifting the receiver, she got no response. She spoke into the phone rather loudly, thinking that, by so doing, she might, even if she did not succeed in reaching central, at least manage to alarm the burglar—who, as yet, had probably not entered the house.

Central did not reply, and the noise at the rear door continued. The ship had quit lo-ing for assistance (whatever had happened to the vessel!) but the man kept working at the lock.

Stepping quickly to a bureau drawer, Jean took out a revolver. A glance at its five chambers there in the bright moonlight of the room, showed it to be completely loaded. She stood and listened again for some time.

As she turned, however, a strong hand closed tightly over her wrist. A moment later, she had lost her weapon.

She did not cry out, but, to her great surprise, found herself speaking quietly to a large man wearing a mask.

“Why are you here?” Her voice was clear and steady.

“Now, Miss, just give me the key to the place where you keep that model. Or, if you prefer, get the model yourself, and turn it over; then no harm will come to you. If you don’t—” He put his other

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great, sinewy hand across her throat, and began to compress a little.

She did not scream. She simply said, "It will do you no good to get the model. The plan of the idea is already in Mr. Proteus' safe." That was the absolute truth. "But, if you want it—" She hesitated, wondering exactly what the consequences might eventually be, should the model fall into wrong hands. She also wondered why it was that she had never clearly thought this present situation out before, provided for it completely.

"Come!" said the inexorable mouth behind the mask. "I'm waiting." The fingers on her throat gave a firmer squeeze. Almost, before she thought, she had cried sharply out.

However, she did manage to control herself then. She calmly said, "One thing I ask: Do not disturb my mother. She's an invalid, and the shock might kill."

"Come!" said the voice. "No further delay." A fearful oath rushed from the hidden lips, the fingers tightened once again, then loosened, then tightened more.

"I will get it," said Jean, as the fingers relaxed.

But the man had stepped a little to one side. Her revolver still hung in his left hand, and, in his right hip-pocket, she noticed an enormous revolver of his own.

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The man suddenly released her, stepped into the back bedroom, at once returned. Then, just as he started to look out of Jean's front window—there came the sudden rush of an automobile! A car stopped before her very door.

Jean gave a little shriek of triumph.

The man rushed past her, dropping her weapon as he did so. Then she heard him raise the back window, saw him leap through it, heard him cry out at the same time to an accomplice: "Run!"

Jean rushed to the window after him. He was already far away among the rocks and houses and the long shadows of both.

Twice she glimpsed the running form of him and his companion.

A sudden pounding came at the front door.

Jean rushed to her window, raised it, and cried out softly: "Mr. Proteus!"

"I dreamed you were in trouble," explained the old lawyer. "You and John. Have I been foolish?"

"Foolish? No." She told the whole story of the burglar in half a score words, went back into her room, threw on a kimona, and descended to let Mr. Proteus in.

Mother Margaret, as is often the way of invalids when once they do get to sleeping, had not awaked. Jean and Mr. Proteus spoke in low tones and did not arouse her.

CHAPTER XXV
MR. PROTEUS TAKES PRECAUTIONS

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AT BREAK of day Mr. Proteus ventured to leave Morning Glory Cottage. He took along with him the model of Jean's device, and later, when the banks were open, bestowed it in a large safety compartment in the lower vault of his own bank. He had told Jean that, until the model was absolutely finished, she could, whenever she liked, leave his office for a morning, go and get the model, and, taking it to Morning Glory Cottage by broad daylight, work on it for several hours. She was then to return it to the bank. The device, perfect as it was in a purely mechanical way, still required, Jean had thought, further simplification in order that it might be placed on the market at a much lower price than in its present somewhat expensive form.

The plan was carried out. Mr. Proteus, however, took an additional precaution. He had his own chauffeur, whenever Jean wished to work at the model, go up to Morning Glory Cottage, get Jean, take her to the bank, then convey both her and her precious package back to the cottage, and there remain till Jean was ready to be taken with the package back to the bank again.

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Then, one day, as Jean sat typing in Mr. Proteus' waiting-room, in walked John and began to propose.

After the interrupted scene, Jean went out, not as John at first believed, or at least suspected, and as Claud afterward lyingly told him, with Claud, but by herself. She also lunched by herself. And, in her heart, all through that half-eaten meal, there kept ringing the happiest words she had ever listened to. And now she knew, deliriously knew, that, when next she met John, she should be made happier still.

CHAPTER XXVI
IT WAS THY HAND

CHAPTER XXVI

IT WAS THY HAND

AS JOHN, after leaving Andy Polano's, was rushing along, he chanced to see at the nearest corner the bright, revolving pole of a barber shop. Remembering that he had not yet been shaved on that day (so intent had he been on recovering his stolen articles) he decided to enter the shop.

All these trivial matters, in the black years to follow, returned to him over and over, and over and over again.

Just as he placed a hand on the barber shop door-knob, a big, burly man came rushing up to him. "Haven't I seen you before? Ah, you remember *me*—Mr. Pressior, realtor, Superior. *Your* name is—"

"John Smith, Granville." John gave his usual smile.

"O yes. Some time ago—some *years* ago— I've a great memory for faces—I saw you—I saw you— Ah yes, I saw you in a Pullman sleeping-car, journeying, as I remember, from Superior to Chicago. I've a great memory for faces. I was talking at the time with a small southern gentleman. He and I were sitting opposite to you. Just now, seeing you come

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out of Andy Polano's, I knowed I knew you. Now if you've got a moment to spare—"

"But I haven't a moment to spare. I—"

"You'll always regret it, if you don't listen," predicted Mr. Pressior. Then, "Go on about your business, Skooth." This to another burly gentleman, who, panting and puffing, had just come up.

"Stranger here?" inquired the new-comer of John. "I'm Skooth, of Duluth, the city with youth."

John smiled his usual "fetcher," but insisted, nevertheless, that, although as a rule he was not in a hurry, he was in a very great hurry indeed just now, and that, further, he would perchance see both of the gentlemen hereafter, at a more convenient time.

"A man can't be so terribly busy, when he's just goin' to get shaved," persisted Mr. Pressior. "And it'll only take a moment to present my case."

"Listen to me," interrupted Mr. Skooth, of Duluth. "That man's a fool: he lives in Superior."

At the moment, a large, square-built gentleman with a military manner and great *sang froid*, sauntered slowly up, gave each of the trio a minute scrutiny, passed on, looked back, went ahead again. As he continued to cross the street, he glanced in various directions—occasionally, furtively, and somewhat officially.

John again made a desperate effort to open the barber-shop door, but both his interlocutors pre-

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vented him. Said Pressior, "Do you like money? Do you *like* money, Mr. Smith? I can make it for you in oodles. Real estate: that's the trick. Real estate in Superior. Easier than finding it. All you got to do is buy: *we* do the sellin' for you. You don't even have to find a customer. We, Mr. Smith—"

"Ah!" broke in Mr. Skooth. "I knowed that I knew you. Mr. Smith—that's the name. I'd forgotten your moniker, Mr. Smith. Got a excellent memory for faces, but names— Brilliant name, too— Smith. Suggests anvils and millions of sparks. Suggests also steadfastness and strength. Now if you'll give me your attention—"

"You don't need to pay anything down," went on Mr. Pressior, as if Mr. Skooth had not been speaking.

"You don't need to pay *him* even your attention down," dominoed Mr. Skooth.

"You *will* pay it, though, Mr. Smith, as soon as you learn of my proposition. You can't really help listening. Now this city of Superior— Why, we have the **ONLY** site for a city."

"Yes, for a city of bull frogs," interrupted Skooth again. "Come up on the Heights with me, Mr. Smith, and look down at Superior—at it and on it. ['Superior' he pronounced in two contemptuous syllables.] Superior's a bog, it lies in a fog, and noby'd live there but a half-sensed frog. Come on up

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upon the Heights. Y' know what Tennyson sung:

'Come up, O maid, upon the mountain heights.
What pleasure lives down there within the swamp?
Come up and see the splendor of the hills.'

Think what buildin' sites is up on these hills!"

"No buildin' sites by a blank sight," interposed Mr. Pressior, laying an affectionate hand on John's arm. "Think, O Mr. Smith, think what it costs to build on and into the trap-rock of Duluth. It's a trap sure enough. Costs more to dig a foundation here than to build a whole house in Superior."

"But think what you got when it's built, if it's built in Duluth," insisted Mr. Skooth, triumphantly, "What's a house at no price in a blessed marsh?" He laughed a long, low, sarcastic laugh, ending: "Whoopee! Why, all that Superior's got, besides the moisture and the ooze, is just what we've rejected."

"So, eh? So you've rejected the greatest ore-docks in the world, the greatest coal-docks, the greatest elevators, the greatest freight yards, and the finest people. So you also—incidentally and of course quite intentionally—rejected the finest and cheapest sites for homes—"

"They're cheap enough."

"And the biggest—"

"You got the biggest policemen."

"*You* have—you need 'em. Look at that policeman

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there now. A plain-clothes man that anybody could tell with half an eye, and with that half wholly blind. And such a bunch as he is of unnecessary fatness, that—”

Both men had turned to look at the plain-clothes man. John, seeing his chance, slipped into the shop.

It was only an ordinary shop, perhaps a little cleaner than the generality of such places, but John had cause to remember it in his after days—each word and act and tiniest surrounding circumstance of that momentous place and hour.

Said the man at the first chair, who was evidently the proprietor, addressing John: “You didn’t bite, out there?”

“No.”

“We got gentlemen too, in the real estate business, *both* o’ these cities. But *them* ain’t *them*. Them’s old-fashioned nuts left over from the boom days. These two cities is really just one city. If we only had one single name to cover the both of them with, we’d realize the fact that the two is one and one only. ‘Twin Ports’ ain’t no kind o’ name, because it makes a person think still more than ever that these here really is *two* places—see? ‘Head o’ the Lakes’ refers to the whole blessed district around here, so that’s no good either. ‘Head City’ is what I call this here one single big burg. It’s a blessed good burg too. Always treated *me* just right, anyway. I—”

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"Next!" The second chair was vacant. John got into it.

Somebody called "Doc" was in chair number three. The barber at that chair addressed him. "Remember, Doc, the woman that shot old Doc Bumpus?"

"Yes."

"Well, as soon as she'd shot him, she run to the office of the Prosecutin' Attorney, and told him all about the whole affair. Finally, says she: 'What can I do?'

"Prosecutin' Attorney he takes down the 'Statutes' an' looks an' looks. Finally he says, 'Don't know what you *can* do. The bounty on doctors seems to have been removed.' "

A laugh filled the shop.

Then said "Doc," "In all the surgery I've done, I've never been able yet to kill a barber."

Barber number one asked, "Why?"

"For the same identical reason that I've never been able to kill a goose."

The shop laughed again. Barber number three, who seemed to be a willing victim, asked: "Barber and goose just the same thing?"

"No," said the doctor, "but barber and goose both look so nearly human."

The barber working on John said to him, "Live in the city?"

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"No."

"Paul Bunyan was in here just a little while ago."

"That so?" responded John, not biting. There was still in his soul a kind of fearful tremulousness, he knew not about what.

"It's so. He spoke of the big snow."

"That so?" queried John, still not biting.

"Yes, and he predicted another snow this coming winter almost as big as the blue snow."

"The blue snow?"

"Yes."

"That so?" John did not always cross-examine.

The barber went on. "You must have heard of the blue snow. It was as blue as indigo. You've heard of Paul Bunyan?"

"Kin to John?"

"John's uncle. But Paul used to lumber here in the old days. Had an ox called 'Babe'—big ox. Babe was thirsty nearly all the time, so, to give him a water-hole, Bunyan scrapes out a big hollow, and that made Lake Superior. That's how Lake Superior got *made*."

"What's the population of this city?" asked John.

The barber looked down his nose. "A hundred and thirty-two thousand seven hundred and sixty-three. The 'three' is me. We had a *mighty* big snow last winter."

"That so?" asked John.

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"Yes, sir." He raised John's chair. Suddenly, into the shop came a tall, broad-shouldered man, with steady black eyes. It was the plain-clothes fellow of the street.

He looked at John for a full minute in the plate-glass mirror which John was facing, and John, for a time, spite of the fact that he had not been doing any evil, felt a strange, deadly chill creep about his heart.

All the barbers had stopped talking, and John himself said little more. When he had paid, put on his hat and overcoat, the tall, black-eyed gentleman said to him, in a very low, but distinct, tone, which would of itself have excited great suspicion anywhere: "Let's take a walk."

John and the big chap went out of the shop together. John remembered, in days long after, the first grave question of this man—"Why did you kill him?"

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